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美味しんぼ

THE RED EARTH

作・雁屋 哲
画・花咲アキラ

BIG COMICS

美味しんぼ 7

THE RED EARTH BY TETSU GAN'YA AND AKIRA HANASAKU. PUBLISHED BY SHOGAKUKAN.

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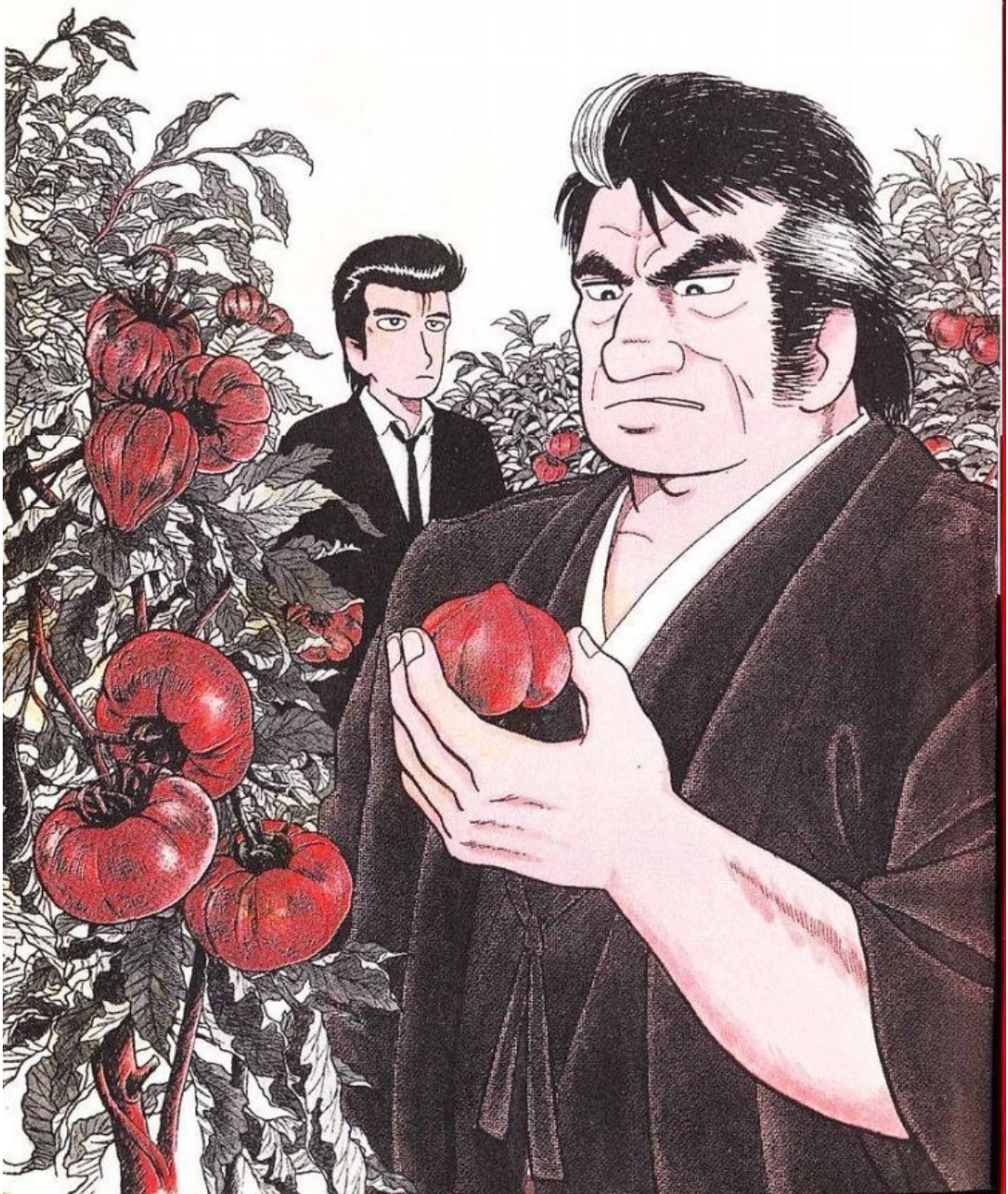
美味しんぼ

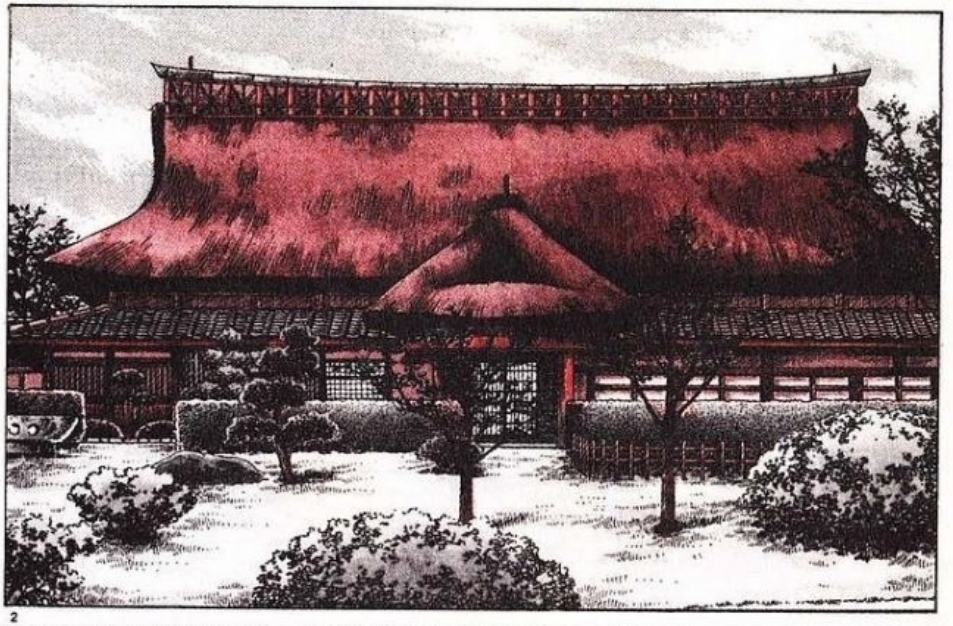
7 大地の赤

ICE CREAM AND LOVE... 29 TEA CONNOISSEURS AND STRAWBERRIES 55 EXQUISITE DEXTERITY 81 SOYBEANS AND BITTERNESS... 105 NATURAL FISH——131 EGG YOLK AND EGG WHITE.....157 A BOXER'S AGONY (PART 2) 207 EPISODE 8: A BOXER'S AGONY PART 1...181 EPISODE 7, EPISODE 5, EPISODE 6, EPISODE 3, EPISODE 4, EPISODE 1 RED EARTH... 3 EPISODE 2

第1話　大地の赤



TODAY IS ONE OF MASTER TOJIN'S KILN OPENING DAYS. HE KINDLY INFORMED US OF THE DATE IN ADVANCE.



2

A GOURMET!

OH, IT'S MY FIRST TIME, AND I'M TRULY HONORED TO BE ABLE TO SEE IT.
YUKO-KUN, IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING A KILN FIRING?

IT'S GREAT TO HAVE SHIRO HELPING OUT, BUT HIS FEE IS STEEP. IT'S A BIT OF A PICKLE.

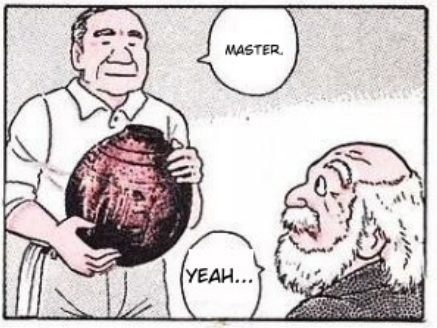
NOW, WHAT WILL I GET AS A REWARD TODAY?
I'LL HELP OUT.

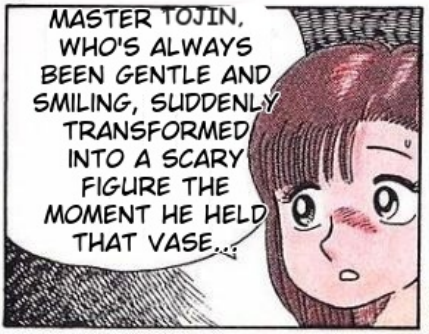
HOW DARE YOU?! WHAT DO YOU THINK POTTERY IS, HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? ACTING LIKE A CON ARTIST, RAKING IN HUGE SUMS FOR JUST KNEADING AND FIRING SOME DIRT.

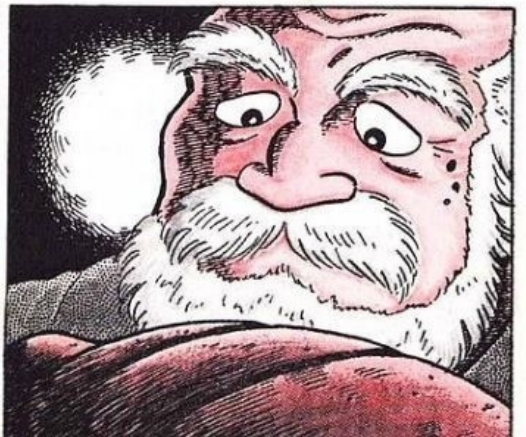
WHAT?!
YUKO'S GOT A POINT! ALRIGHT, YUKO, YOU CAN HAVE ANYTHING YOU WANT, BUT NOT A THING FOR SHIRO.
YOU MEAN I CAN REALLY HAVE ONE OF YOUR PIECES, MASTER TOYAMA?!

BUT THERE ARE MANY CERAMIC ARTISTS LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW. JUST BECAUSE THEY'RE THE SONS OF FAMOUS CERAMIC ARTISTS, THEY ACT ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY, SLAPPING ON EXORBITANT PRICES.

DON'T PAIR UP THAT FAKE CERAMIC ARTIST WITH MASTER TOJIN! IT'S JUST PLAIN DISRESPECTFUL.


MASTER.
YEAH...


MASTER TOJIN, WHO'S ALWAYS BEEN GENTLE AND SMILING, SUDDENLY TRANSFORMED INTO A SCARY FIGURE THE MOMENT HE HELD THAT VASE...



A GOURMET!

I DON'T LIKE IT.
EEK! WHY ARE YOU BREAKING IT?!

WHAT A WASTE AFTER YOU WENT TO ALL THE TROUBLE OF MAKING IT!

AT FIRST, I ALSO THOUGHT IT WAS A WASTE... BUT LEAVING BEHIND PIECES YOU'RE NOT FOND OF IS EXCRUCIATING FOR A POTTER, YOU KNOW.

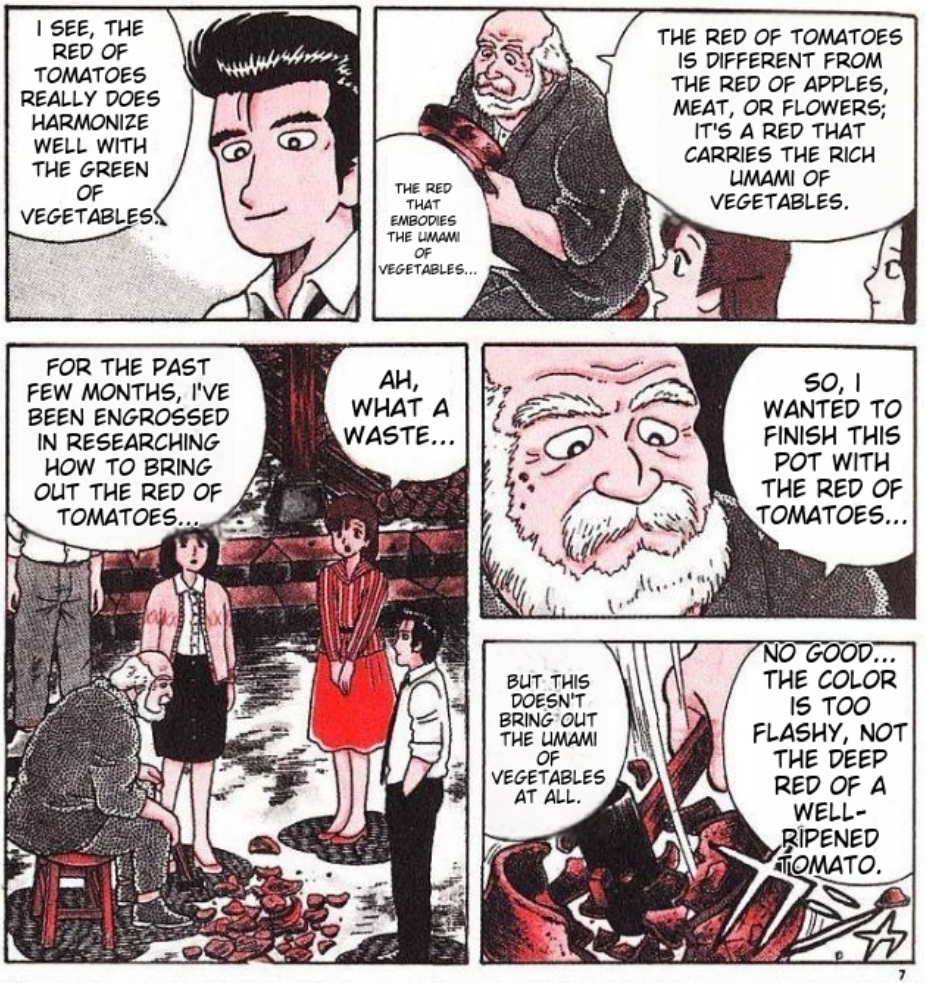
5

I WONDER IF I CAN EAT FROM THIS?
IT'S NOT BAD AT ALL, THE SHAPE IS NICE, AND THE GLAZE TURNED OUT WELL... AND IT CAME OUT NICELY TOO.

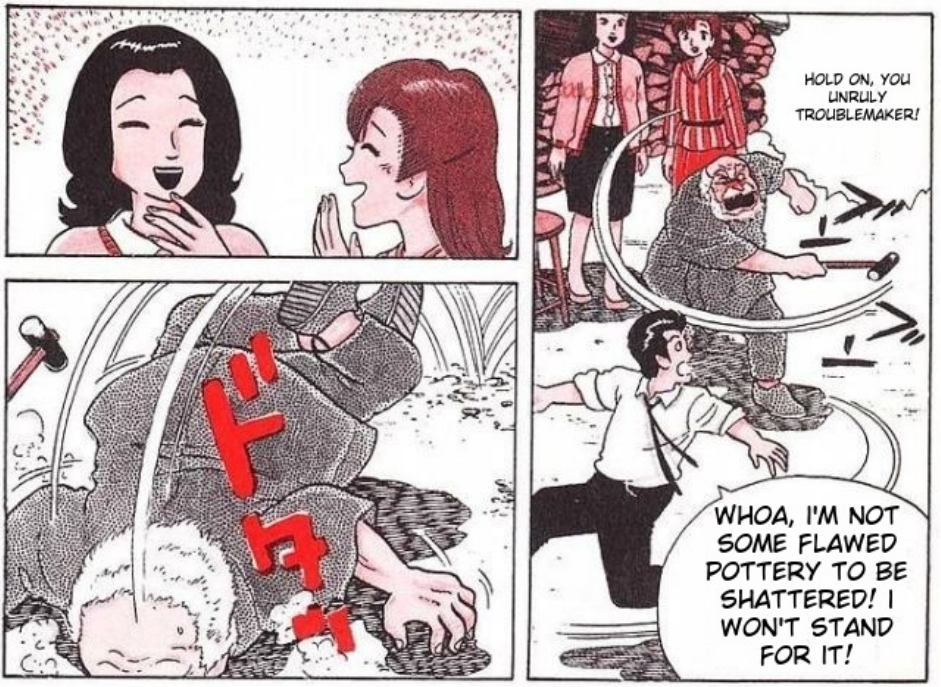
HMM... SHIRO, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS?

HMPH... FINE.
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, THERE'S NO WAY I'D GIVE IT TO SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
!
PHEW, THAT'S A RELIEF.
FINALLY, A PIECE THAT PASSES THE TEST!
I'VE BEEN ASKED BY A PAINTER FRIEND FOR YEARS NOW TO PUT EDAMAME IN A BOWL AND EAT IT IN THE SUMMER.
OH, A RED BOWL? HOW UNIQUE.
6
IT'S TOMATOES.
WHEN IT COMES TO RED VEGETABLES...
THE BEST MATCH FOR THE GREEN OF THE VEGETABLES IN THE BOWL IS INDEED THE RED OF THE VEGETABLES.
IF YOU PUT GREEN EDAMAME IN A RED BOWL, IT'S SURE TO STAND OUT. BUT THE PROBLEM LIES IN THAT RED COLOR, IT'S TRICKY TO MAKE IT POP AGAINST THE GREEN OF THE EDAMAME.

A GOURMET!

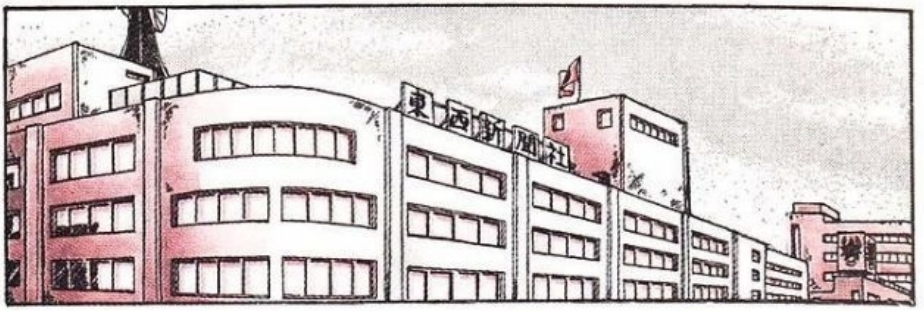

I SEE, THE RED OF TOMATOES REALLY DOES HARMONIZE WELL WITH THE GREEN OF VEGETABLES.
THE RED OF TOMATOES IS DIFFERENT FROM THE RED OF APPLES, MEAT, OR FLOWERS; IT'S A RED THAT CARRIES THE RICH UMAMI OF VEGETABLES.
THE RED THAT EMBODIES THE UMAMI OF VEGETABLES...
FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS, I'VE BEEN ENGROSSED IN RESEARCHING HOW TO BRING OUT THE RED OF TOMATOES...
AH, WHAT A WASTE...
SO, I WANTED TO FINISH THIS POT WITH THE RED OF TOMATOES...
BUT THIS DOESN'T BRING OUT THE UMAMI OF VEGETABLES AT ALL.
NO GOOD... THE COLOR IS TOO FLASHY, NOT THE DEEP RED OF A WELL-RIPENED TOMATO.

ORO~~! YOU JUST LOVE TEASING ME WHILE I'M STRUGGLING, DON'T YOU!
IT'S LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF AN OLD KAKIEMON POTTERY PIECE, MAYBE WE SHOULD RENAME IT 'TOMATOMAN' OR SOMETHING?

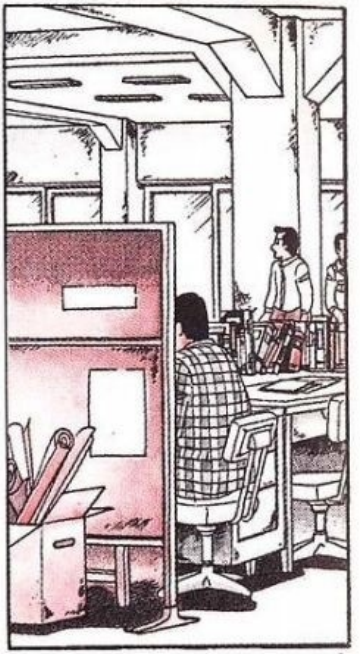

HOLD ON, YOU UNRULY TROUBLEMAKER!
ドカ
WHOA, I'M NOT SOME FLAWED POTTERY TO BE SHATTERED! I WON'T STAND FOR IT!

MASTER TOYAMA?!
OUCH! MY ANKLE...IT HURTS SO BAD...
OH, THERE GOES TOJIN-KUN
OW, IT HURTS!

PROFESSOR TOYAMA HAS TWISTED HIS ANKLE!!!
QUICK, SOMEONE CALL AN AMBULANCE!
SHIRO, THIS IS YOUR FAULT, ISN'T IT!



WE MUST GO PAY OUR RESPECTS AS A COMPANY AS WELL.
I HEARD THAT PROFESSOR TOYAMA HAS BEEN INJURED AND IS HOSPITALIZED,



WHY BOTHER? HE'S FINE. IN ANY CASE, IT WAS HIS OWN FAULT THAT HE GOT HURT.

9

TCH, WHAT A CHATTY WOMAN.

IF YOU KNOW THE CAUSE OF THE INJURY, ALL THE MORE REASON TO PAY A VISIT.

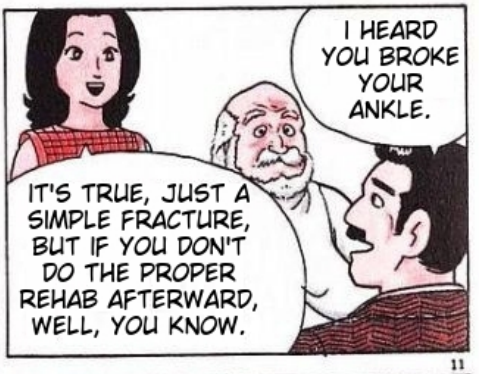
PHEW, YOU GUYS SURE DO KNOW HOW TO PLACE ORDERS LEFT AND RIGHT.
OH, HEY, HOLD UP! YOU'RE CUTTING TOO MUCH THERE. IT'S GONNA THROW OFF THE BALANCE ON THE LEFT, YOU KNOW?
10
WELL, LOOK WHO'S HERE! THANKS A BUNCH FOR COMING TO VISIT.
WELL, WELL, WELL, WHAT DO WE HAVE HERE?
HEY THERE, HOW'S IT HANGING?

SHIRO, DID YOU COME TO VISIT ME OR TO TICK ME OFF?
OH MY, FLAUNTING YOUR CHARMS, EVEN BOTHERING TO GROOM YOUR BEARD.

JEEZ... THIS GUY...

WELL, SEEING YOU HAVE THAT MUCH ENERGY TO GET MAD ACTUALLY REASSURES ME.

HEY, SHIRO, JUST GO HOME ALREADY!

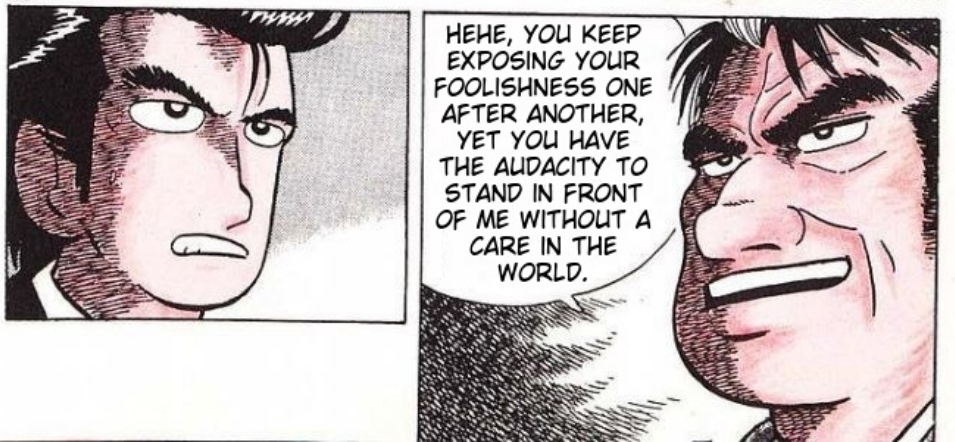

I HEARD YOU BROKE YOUR ANKLE.
IT'S TRUE, JUST A SIMPLE FRACTURE, BUT IF YOU DON'T DO THE PROPER REHAB AFTERWARD, WELL, YOU KNOW.

11

IT'S A COMMON THING, YOU LOSE THE ABILITY TO MOVE YOUR LEGS, THEN YOUR MIND GOES MUSHY, HAPPENS A LOT.
YAMAOKA-SAN!

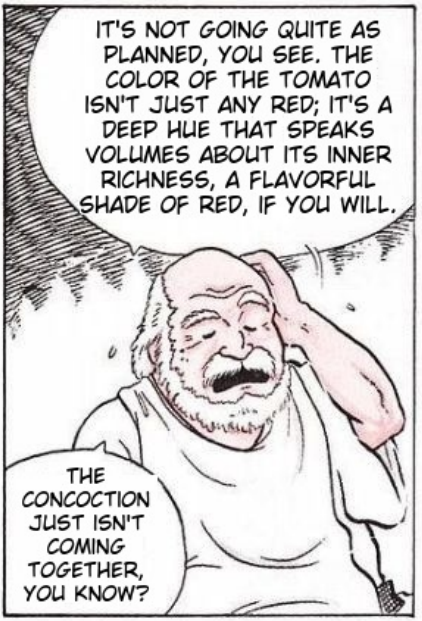
KAIBARA YUZAN?!
OH, WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION ABOUT?
ギロ

I'VE BEEN SEEING YOU A LOT LATELY, SO COULD YOU PLEASE STOP LOITERING AROUND WHERE I CAN EASILY SPOT YOU? YOU'RE GETTING ON MY NERVES!
WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE?!

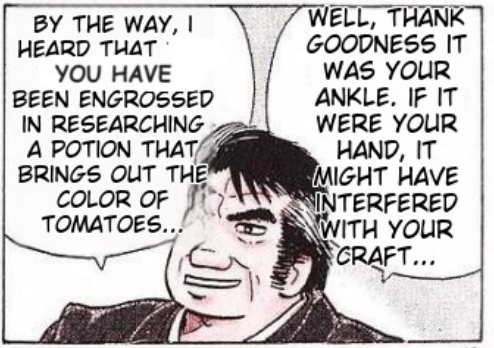

HEHE, YOU KEEP EXPOSING YOUR FOOLISHNESS ONE AFTER ANOTHER, YET YOU HAVE THE AUDACITY TO STAND IN FRONT OF ME WITHOUT A CARE IN THE WORLD.

A GOURMET!

HAHAHA, SLIPPED IN THE BATHROOM AND ALL, SUCH A BLUNDER.
WELL, WHAT A CALAMITY IT WAS FOR YOU, PROFESSOR.

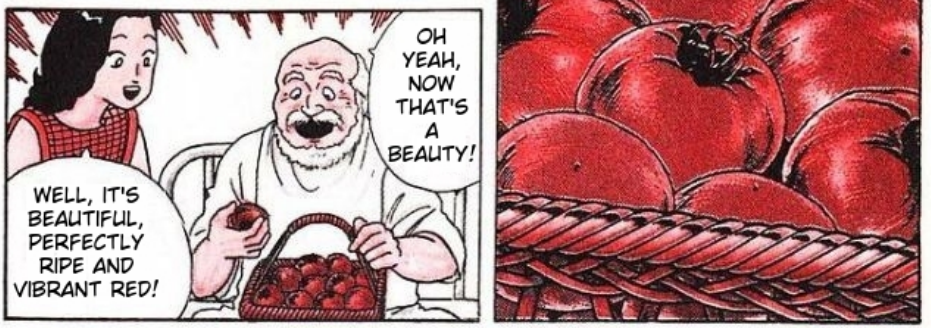

IT'S NOT GOING QUITE AS PLANNED, YOU SEE. THE COLOR OF THE TOMATO ISN'T JUST ANY RED; IT'S A DEEP HUE THAT SPEAKS VOLUMES ABOUT ITS INNER RICHNESS, A FLAVORFUL SHADE OF RED, IF YOU WILL.
THE CONCOCTION JUST ISN'T COMING TOGETHER, YOU KNOW?

PROFESSOR TOJIN IS DEFENDING YAMAOKA; SEEMS LIKE HE'S QUITE FOND OF HIM AFTER ALL.

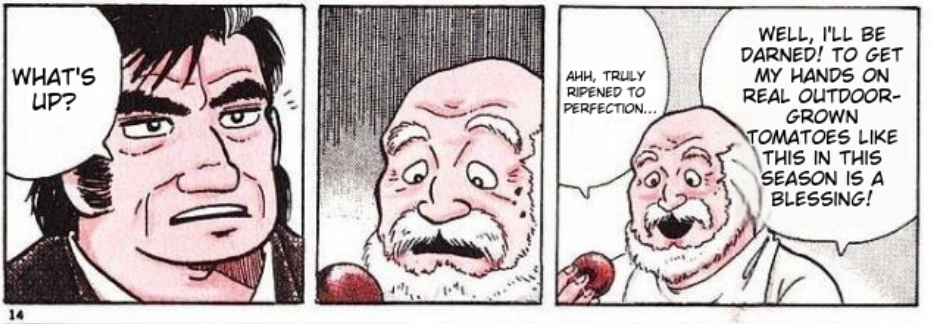

BY THE WAY, I HEARD THAT YOU HAVE BEEN ENGROSSED IN RESEARCHING A POTION THAT BRINGS OUT THE COLOR OF TOMATOES...
WELL, THANK GOODNESS IT WAS YOUR ANKLE. IF IT WERE YOUR HAND, IT MIGHT HAVE INTERFERED WITH YOUR CRAFT...

13

OH, A TOMATO, YOU SAY?
KNOWING YOU, MASTER TOJIN. I'M SURE YOU'LL ACHIEVE THE PERFECT BLEND SOON ENOUGH. I BROUGHT A TOMATO ALONG FOR REFERENCE.


OH YEAH, NOW THAT'S A BEAUTY!
WELL, IT'S BEAUTIFUL, PERFECTLY RIPE AND VIBRANT RED!

UNLIKE THOSE TOMATOES THAT ARE PICKED GREEN AND RIPENED ARTIFICIALLY IN THE DISTRIBUTION PROCESS, THIS ONE WAS LEFT TO RIPEN FULLY ON THE VINE AND THEN FLOWN IN BY AIR.
ALL YOU CAN FIND THIS SEASON ARE THOSE TASTELESS GREENHOUSE TOMATOES. BUT THIS ONE, OH, THIS ONE IS GROWN IN KAGOSHIMA WITH TRADITIONAL ORGANIC FARMING METHODS, OUT IN THE OPEN FIELD, NOT IN A GREENHOUSE.


WHAT'S UP?
AHH, TRULY RIPENED TO PERFECTION...
WELL, I'LL BE DARNED! TO GET MY HANDS ON REAL OUTDOOR-GROWN TOMATOES LIKE THIS IN THIS SEASON IS A BLESSING!

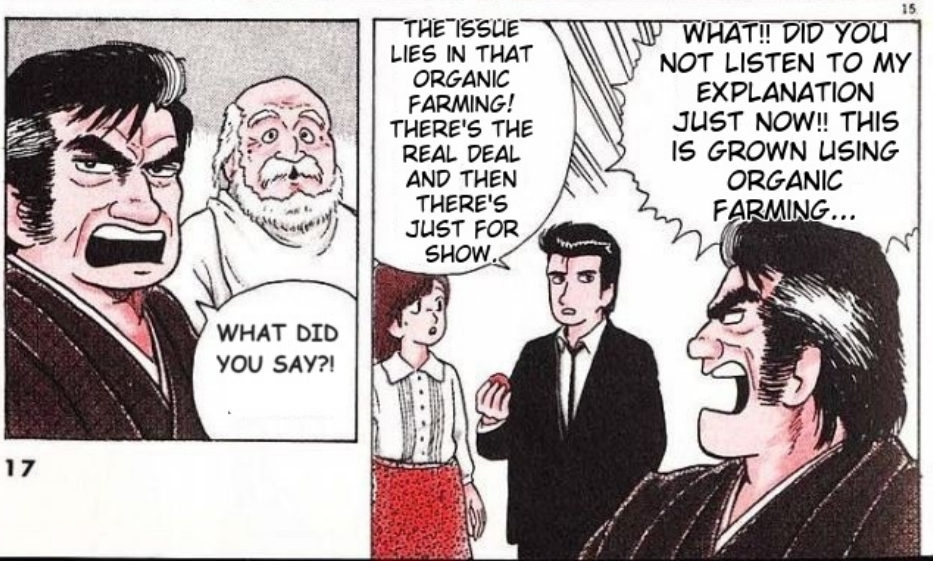
14

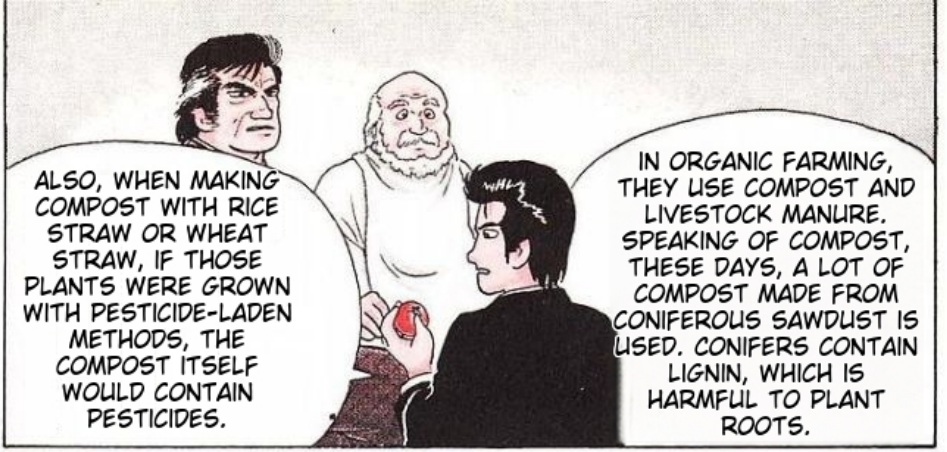
BUT YOU KNOW WHAT? IT'S LIKE... IT'S NOT RIPENED THE USUAL WAY, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN...
THIS TOMATO IS INDEED RED, PERFECTLY RIPE.
YUZAN... IT'S A SHAME, BUT THIS TOMATO HERE IS JUST NOT WHAT I HAD IN MIND.
HUH?

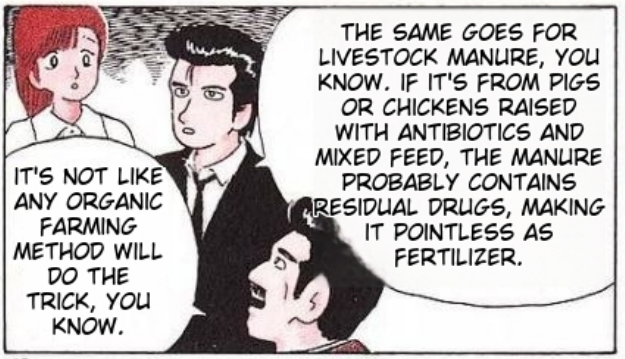
HMM... I DOUBT THAT...
THAT'S RIDICULOUS! WE RIPEN THEM ON THE TREE USING ORGANIC FARMING WITHOUT ANY PESTICIDES. YOU WON'T FIND ANYTHING BETTER, NOT EVEN IN THE PEAK OF SUMMER.
BUT... IT'S SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE TOMATOES I REMEMBER FROM BACK IN THE DAY. WITH THIS COLOR, I COULD PROBABLY PASS IT OFF AS MY OWN CONCOCTION.

THIS TOMATO AIN'T JUST RIPE, IT'S THE REAL DEAL, TRULY FULLY RIPE TOMATO, YOU KNOW.

15.

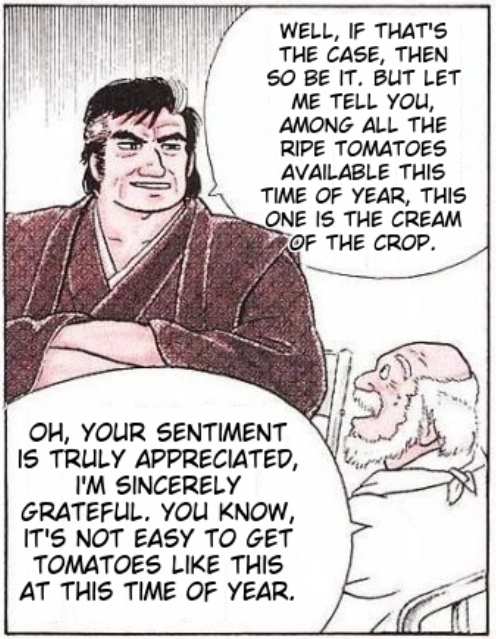

WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
THE ISSUE LIES IN THAT ORGANIC FARMING! THERE'S THE REAL DEAL AND THEN THERE'S JUST FOR SHOW.
WHAT!! DID YOU NOT LISTEN TO MY EXPLANATION JUST NOW!! THIS IS GROWN USING ORGANIC FARMING...

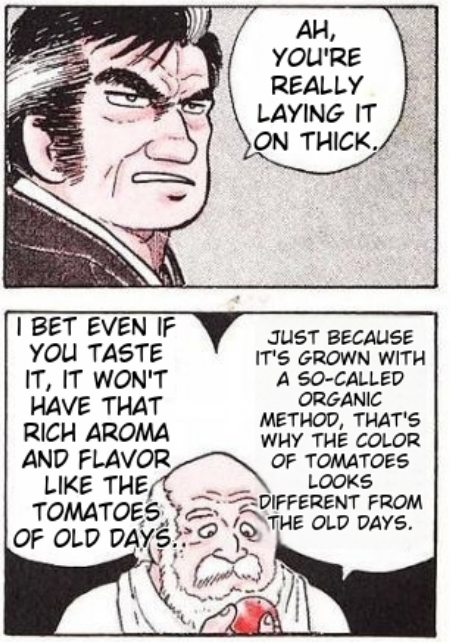

ALSO, WHEN MAKING COMPOST WITH RICE STRAW OR WHEAT STRAW, IF THOSE PLANTS WERE GROWN WITH PESTICIDE-LADEN METHODS, THE COMPOST ITSELF WOULD CONTAIN PESTICIDES.
IN ORGANIC FARMING, THEY USE COMPOST AND LIVESTOCK MANURE. SPEAKING OF COMPOST, THESE DAYS, A LOT OF COMPOST MADE FROM CONIFEROUS SAWDUST IS USED. CONIFERS CONTAIN LIGNIN, WHICH IS HARMFUL TO PLANT ROOTS.


IT'S NOT LIKE ANY ORGANIC FARMING METHOD WILL DO THE TRICK, YOU KNOW.
THE SAME GOES FOR LIVESTOCK MANURE, YOU KNOW. IF IT'S FROM PIGS OR CHICKENS RAISED WITH ANTIBIOTICS AND MIXED FEED, THE MANURE PROBABLY CONTAINS RESIDUAL DRUGS, MAKING IT POINTLESS AS FERTILIZER.

EVEN WITH ORGANIC FARMING, IT'S POINTLESS IF THE PLANTS ABSORB PESTICIDES FROM THE FERTILIZERS.

16


WELL, IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN SO BE IT. BUT LET ME TELL YOU, AMONG ALL THE RIPE TOMATOES AVAILABLE THIS TIME OF YEAR, THIS ONE IS THE CREAM OF THE CROP.
OH, YOUR SENTIMENT IS TRULY APPRECIATED, I'M SINCERELY GRATEFUL. YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT EASY TO GET TOMATOES LIKE THIS AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.


AH, YOU'RE REALLY LAYING IT ON THICK.
I BET EVEN IF YOU TASTE IT, IT WON'T HAVE THAT RICH AROMA AND FLAVOR LIKE THE TOMATOES OF OLD DAYS.
JUST BECAUSE IT'S GROWN WITH A SO-CALLED ORGANIC METHOD, THAT'S WHY THE COLOR OF TOMATOES LOOKS DIFFERENT FROM THE OLD DAYS.

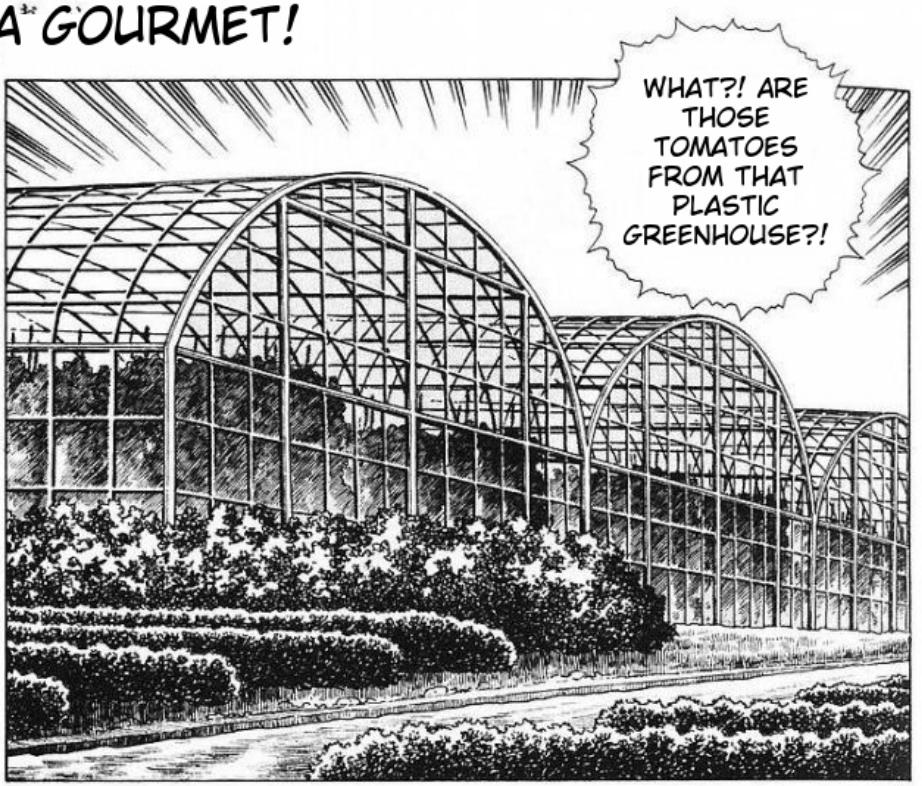
A GOURMET!

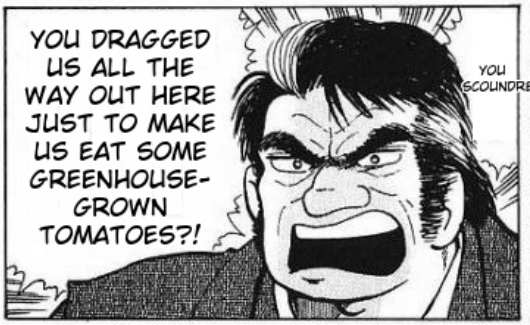
HAHAHA, WHAT NONSENSE ARE YOU SPOUTING? THE PEAK SEASON FOR TOMATOES IS IN SUMMER, THERE'S NO WAY JANUARY AND FEBRUARY ARE PEAK TOMATO SEASONS!
HUH? JANUARY TO FEBRUARY IS THE PEAK SEASON FOR TOMATOES?!
NO WAY... YOU CAN STILL GET YOUR HANDS ON REAL RIPE TOMATOES. IN FACT, IT'S KINDA LATE NOW, AS JANUARY TO FEBRUARY IS THE PEAK SEASON FOR TOMATOES.
IN A WEEK, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO MOVE AROUND IN A WHEELCHAIR.
OF COURSE.
ALRIGHT THEN, IF THERE'S A PLACE WHERE I CAN GET RIPE TOMATOES AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, SHOW ME THE WAY!
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU TALK ABOUT IT, YOU WON'T UNDERSTAND UNTIL YOU SEE IT WITH YOUR OWN EYES...
YOU HAD BETTER NOT WASTE MY TIME ON THIS, SHIRO!!!
IS THERE REALLY SUCH A TOMATO FIELD?
WELL THEN, LET'S GUIDE EVERYONE TO THE TOMATO FIELD IN A WEEK'S TIME.

- SHIZUOKA PREFECTURE,
KAKEGAWA CITY -

18

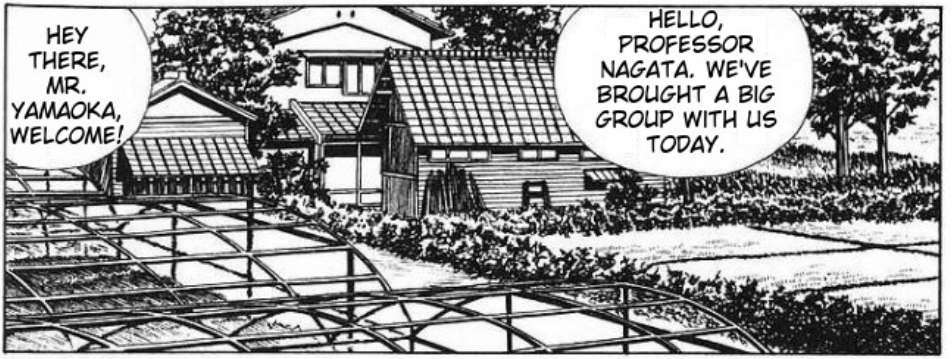
YOU SEE IT OVER THERE?
WHERE IS THAT TOMATO FIELD LOCATED?


WHAT?! ARE THOSE TOMATOES FROM THAT PLASTIC GREENHOUSE?!


YOU DRAGGED US ALL THE WAY OUT HERE JUST TO MAKE US EAT SOME GREENHOUSE-GROWN TOMATOES?!
YOU SCOUNDREL!

EAT GREENHOUSE-GROWN TOMATOES?! STOP MESSING AROUND WITH US!
WHY DON'T YOU TRY THEM FIRST BEFORE YOU START COMPLAINING ABOUT IT.

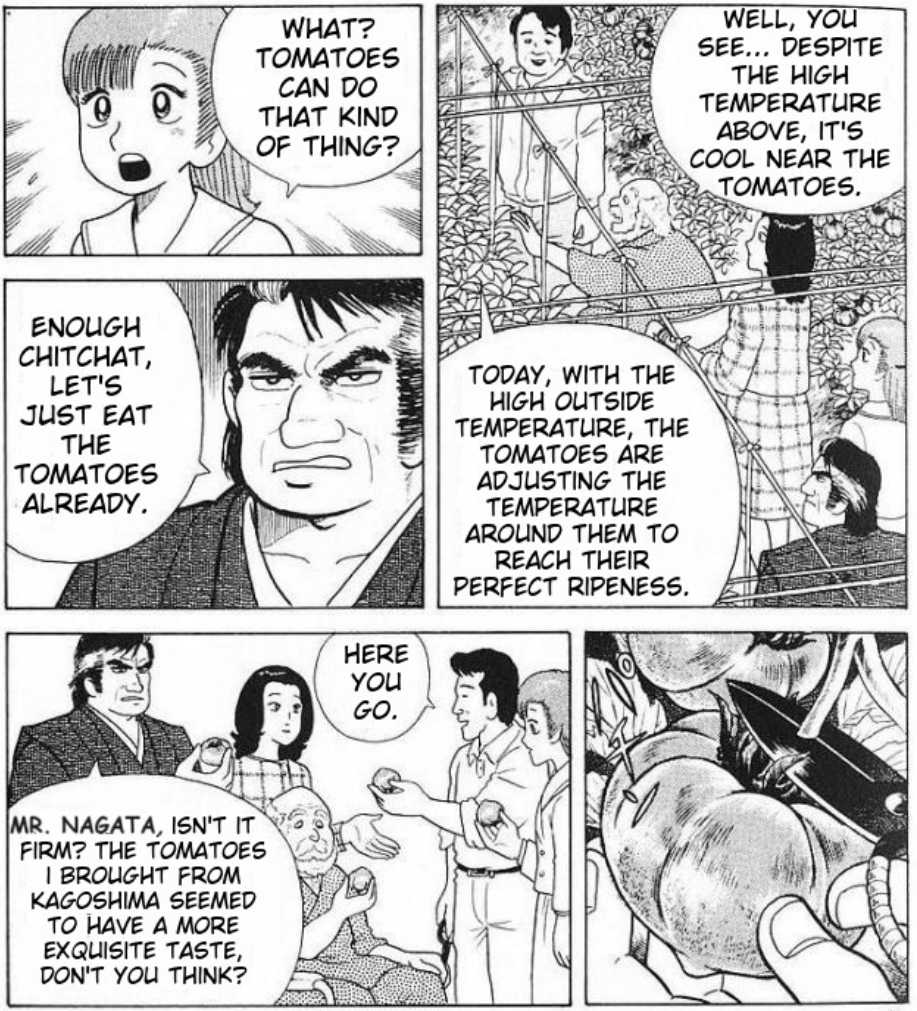
WELL, MAYBE SHIROU HAS A POINT. WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL WE TASTE THEM.


HEY THERE, MR. YAMAOKA, WELCOME!
HELLO, PROFESSOR NAGATA. WE'VE BROUGHT A BIG GROUP WITH US TODAY.

I HOPE THAT IT'S ALRIGHT WITH YOU IF I TAG ALONG.
AH... IT'S MR. ISHIYAMA, THE OWNER OF THE HOUSE. HE SEEMS KEEN ON OBSERVING OUR TOMATO CULTIVATION...

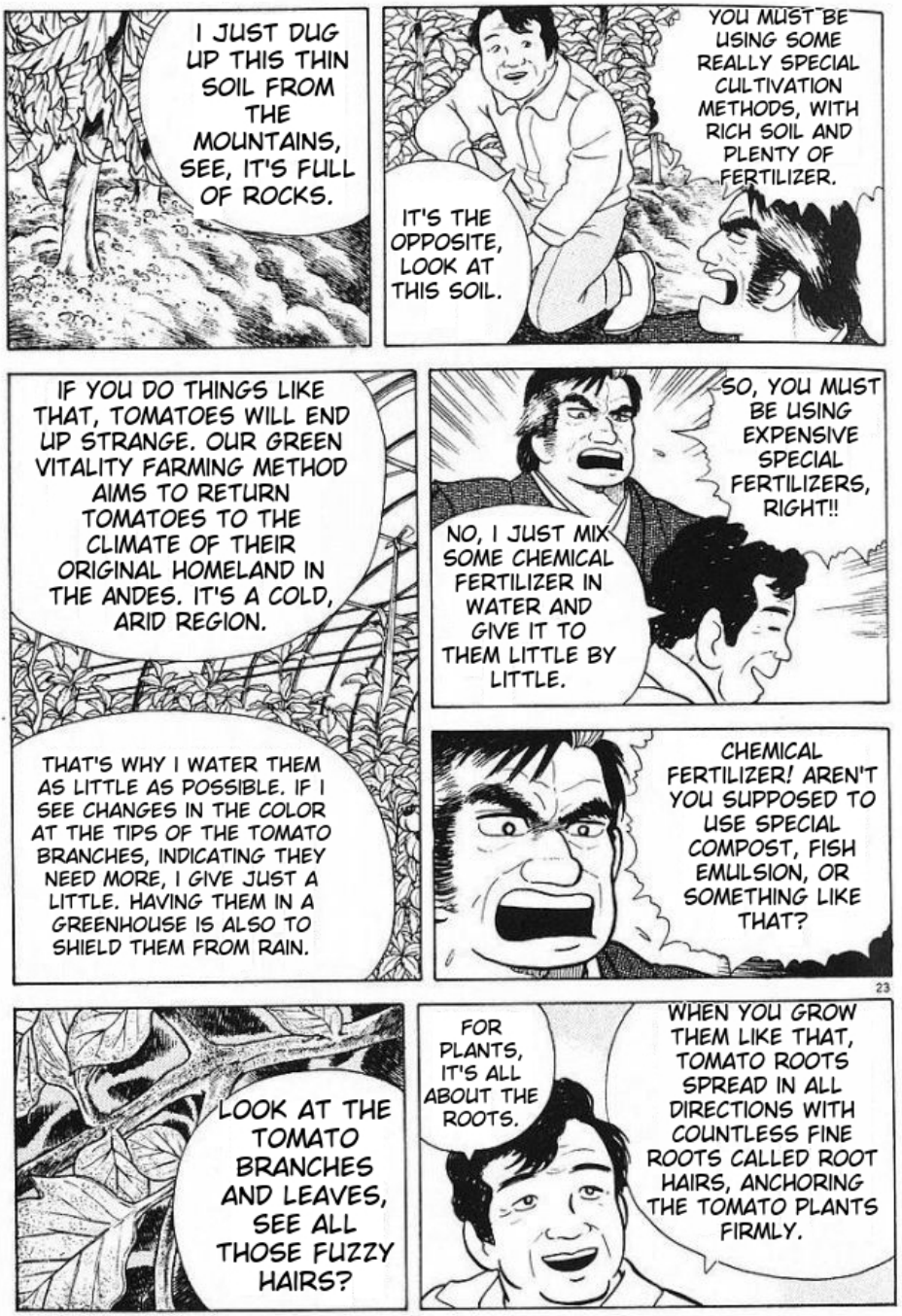
OH MY, THE TOMATO LEAVES SEEM TO BE WILTING.

' WE KEEP THE WATER LEVEL JUST RIGHT AT THE EDGE, SO DON'T WORRY, THE LEAVES AREN'T WILTING FOR REAL.
WE CALL OUR FARMING METHOD 'GREEN HEALTH FARMING.


WHAT? TOMATOES CAN DO THAT KIND OF THING?
WELL, YOU SEE... DESPITE THE HIGH TEMPERATURE ABOVE, IT'S COOL NEAR THE TOMATOES.
ENOUGH CHITCHAT, LET'S JUST EAT THE TOMATOES ALREADY.
TODAY, WITH THE HIGH OUTSIDE TEMPERATURE, THE TOMATOES ARE ADJUSTING THE TEMPERATURE AROUND THEM TO REACH THEIR PERFECT RIPENESS.
HERE YOU GO.
MR. NAGATA, ISN'T IT FIRM? THE TOMATOES I BROUGHT FROM KAGOSHIMA SEEMED TO HAVE A MORE EXQUISITE TASTE, DON'T YOU THINK?
21
FULLY RIPENED TOMATOES GIVE OFF SUCH A DELIGHTFUL AROMA, YOU KNOW.
REALLY, I ALWAYS THOUGHT TOMATOES HAD THAT GREENISH SMELL...
OH, WHAT A LOVELY SCENT, IT'S SOMEWHAT LIKE THE FRAGRANCE OF APPLES.

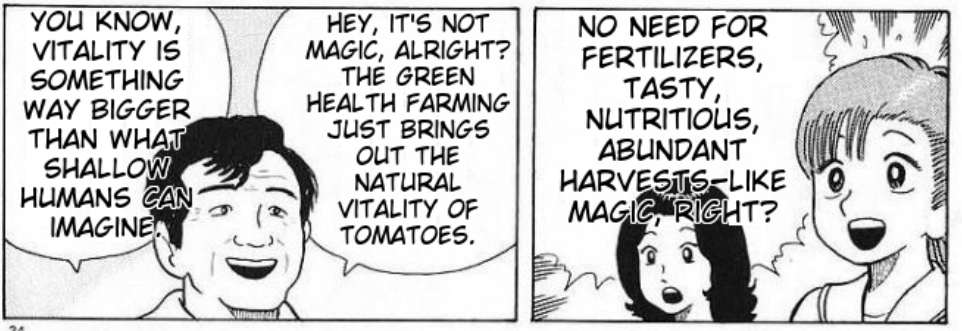
シャク
シャク
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THIS TOMATO?!
THIS IS THE REAL DEAL TOMATO!
NOOO WAY! THIS AIN'T A TOMATO!
NO, THIS IS THE REAL DEAL, THE TRUE EPITOME OF RIPE TOMATOES.
SWEET LIKE FRUIT! AND THIS AROMA, IT'S LIKE THE TOMATOES FROM THE GOOD OL' DAYS!
22
T-T-T-T-T-T-T-T-T-T-T-THIS... THIS IS...

A GOURMET!


I JUST DUG UP THIS THIN SOIL FROM THE MOUNTAINS, SEE, IT'S FULL OF ROCKS.
YOU MUST BE USING SOME REALLY SPECIAL CULTIVATION METHODS, WITH RICH SOIL AND PLENTY OF FERTILIZER.
IT'S THE OPPOSITE, LOOK AT THIS SOIL.
IF YOU DO THINGS LIKE THAT, TOMATOES WILL END UP STRANGE. OUR GREEN VITALITY FARMING METHOD AIMS TO RETURN TOMATOES TO THE CLIMATE OF THEIR ORIGINAL HOMELAND IN THE ANDES. IT'S A COLD, ARID REGION.
SO, YOU MUST BE USING EXPENSIVE SPECIAL FERTILIZERS, RIGHT!!
NO, I JUST MIX SOME CHEMICAL FERTILIZER IN WATER AND GIVE IT TO THEM LITTLE BY LITTLE.
THAT'S WHY I WATER THEM AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE. IF I SEE CHANGES IN THE COLOR AT THE TIPS OF THE TOMATO BRANCHES, INDICATING THEY NEED MORE, I GIVE JUST A LITTLE. HAVING THEM IN A GREENHOUSE IS ALSO TO SHIELD THEM FROM RAIN.
CHEMICAL FERTILIZER! AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO USE SPECIAL COMPOST, FISH EMULSION, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
23
LOOK AT THE TOMATO BRANCHES AND LEAVES, SEE ALL THOSE FUZZY HAIRS?
FOR PLANTS, IT'S ALL ABOUT THE ROOTS.
WHEN YOU GROW THEM LIKE THAT, TOMATO ROOTS SPREAD IN ALL DIRECTIONS WITH COUNTLESS FINE ROOTS CALLED ROOT HAIRS, ANCHORING THE TOMATO PLANTS FIRMLY.

WHEN YOU RETURN TOMATOES TO THEIR ORIGINAL ENVIRONMENT, THEY CREATE SUCH DELICIOUS TOMATOES, A SECRET ONLY TOMATOES KNOW.
THAT'S THE SECRET OF GREEN HEALTH FARMING, NOTHING ELSE.
OH, ABSORBING MOISTURE FROM THE AIR, HUH?
SINCE THEY DON'T GET MUCH WATER, THESE FINE LITTLE HAIRS SPROUT TO ABSORB MOISTURE FROM THE AIR.

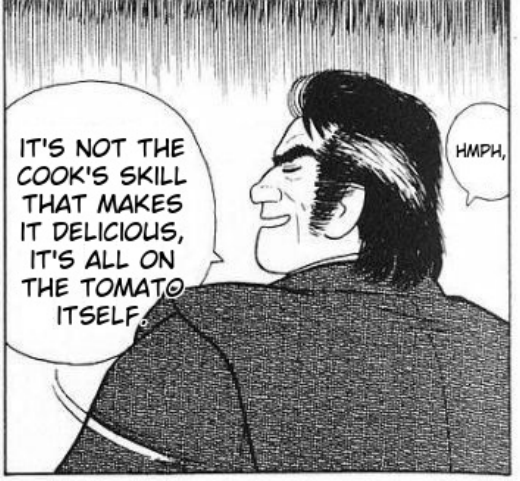
AND THE AMAZING THING IS, IT CONTAINS 30 TIMES MORE VITAMIN C THAN REGULAR TOMATOES, PLUS YOU GET A LOT MORE HARVESTS!
I USED TO DO ORGANIC FARMING. WHEN I FIRST HEARD ABOUT THE GREEN HEALTH FARMING FROM PROFESSOR NAGATA, I THOUGHT IT WAS NONSENSE. BUT WHEN I TRIED IT, I COULDN'T BELIEVE THE INCREDIBLY TASTY TOMATOES THAT CAME OUT OF IT!


YOU KNOW, VITALITY IS SOMETHING WAY BIGGER THAN WHAT SHALLOW HUMANS CAN IMAGINE.
HEY, IT'S NOT MAGIC, ALRIGHT? THE GREEN HEALTH FARMING JUST BRINGS OUT THE NATURAL VITALITY OF TOMATOES.
NO NEED FOR FERTILIZERS, TASTY, NUTRITIOUS, ABUNDANT HARVESTS—LIKE MAGIC, RIGHT?

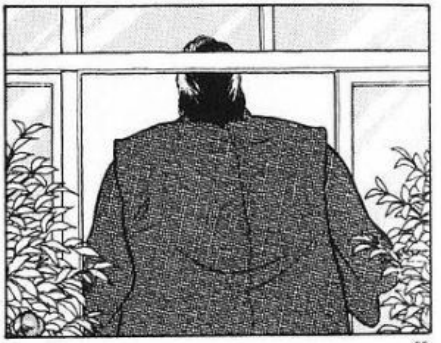
24

THIS DEEP RED HUE SYMBOLIZES VITALITY AND DELICIOUSNESS!
THIS IS THE COLOR I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR!

THAT'S RIGHT, WE DO NOTHING, IT'S ALL ON THE TOMATO.

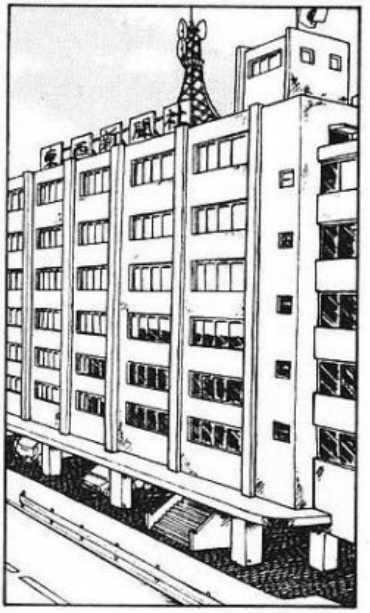

IT'S NOT THE COOK'S SKILL THAT MAKES IT DELICIOUS, IT'S ALL ON THE TOMATO ITSELF.
HMPH,

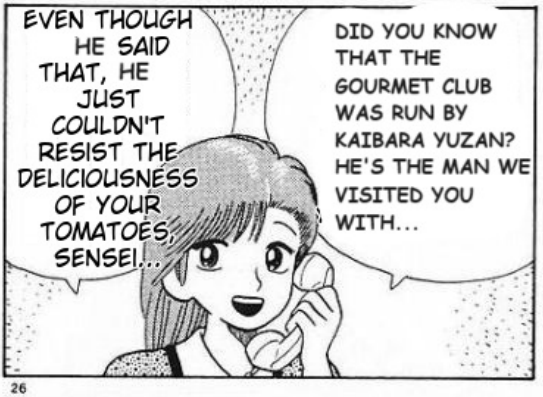
TOJIN-KUN, YOU'RE BEING SO RUDE!!!
IT'S JUST SO DARN TASTY, YOU KNOW.
HAHAHA, PLEASE, INDULGE TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT.

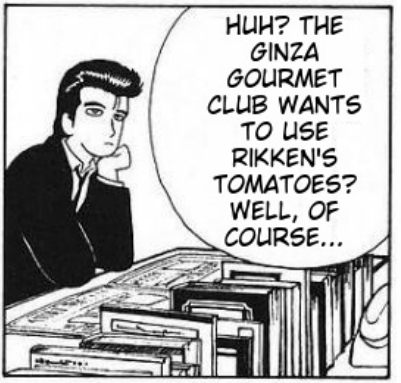

25

IT'S JUST AS MR. NAGATA SAID. IT'S ALL ON THE TOMATO.
WELL, LOOKS LIKE WE FINALLY GOT ONE OVER ON KAIBARA YUZAN, EH?

AH, MR. NAGATA, THANK YOU FOR THE FEAST THE OTHER DAY. I REALLY APPRECIATE ALL YOUR HELP...




EVEN THOUGH HE SAID THAT, HE JUST COULDN'T RESIST THE DELICIOUSNESS OF YOUR TOMATOES, SENSEI...
DID YOU KNOW THAT THE GOURMET CLUB WAS RUN BY KAIBARA YUZAN? HE'S THE MAN WE VISITED YOU WITH...


HUH? THE GINZA GOURMET CLUB WANTS TO USE RIKKEN'S TOMATOES? WELL, OF COURSE...

第2話
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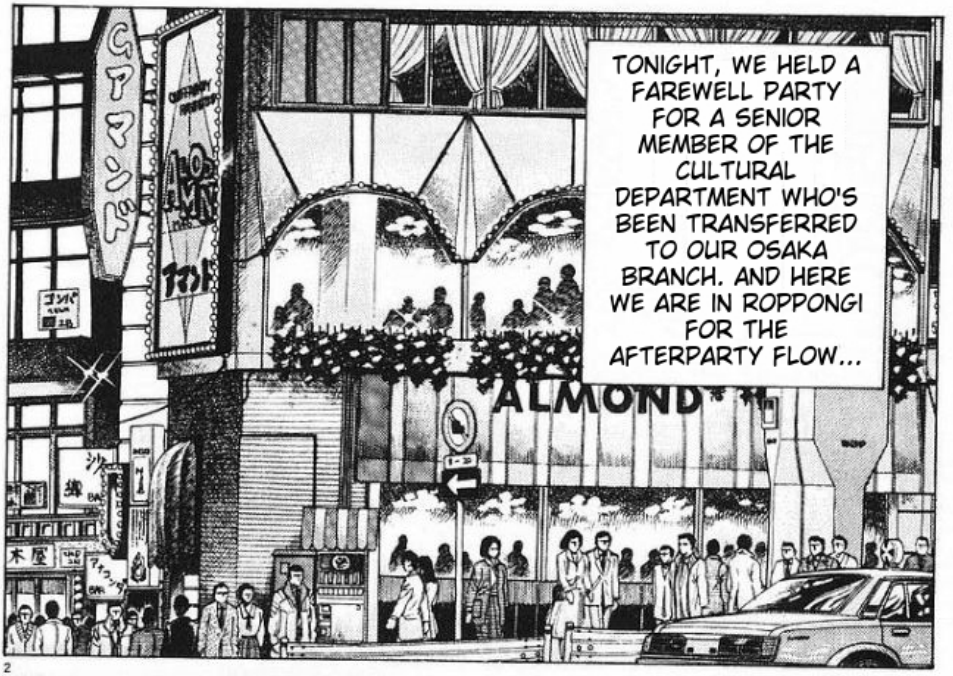

TONIGHT, WE HELD A FAREWELL PARTY FOR A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE CULTURAL DEPARTMENT WHO'S BEEN TRANSFERRED TO OUR OSAKA BRANCH. AND HERE WE ARE IN ROPPONGI FOR THE AFTERPARTY FLOW...
ALMOND

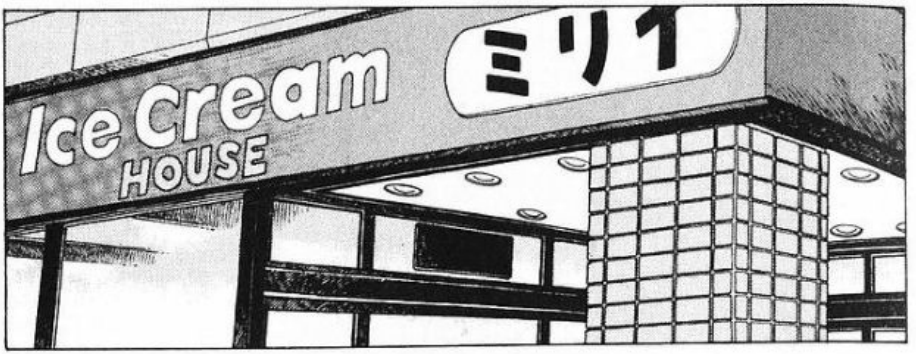
2

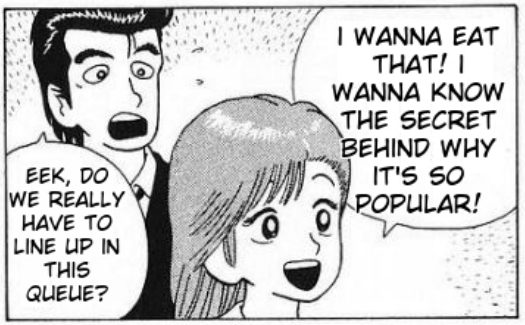
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THIS PLACE...

SO MANY YOUNG PEOPLE HERE, IT'S LIKE A YOUTH EXPLOSION!
WOW, SUCH A LIVELY CROWD. TOTALLY DIFFERENT VIBE FROM GINZA, ISN'T IT?

?

FOODIE HEAVEN!





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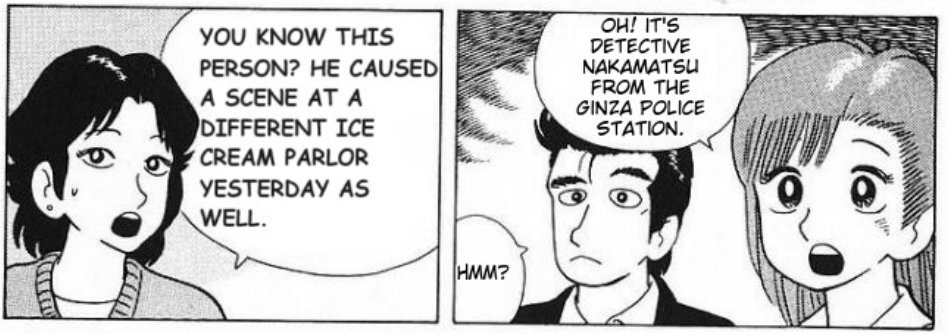
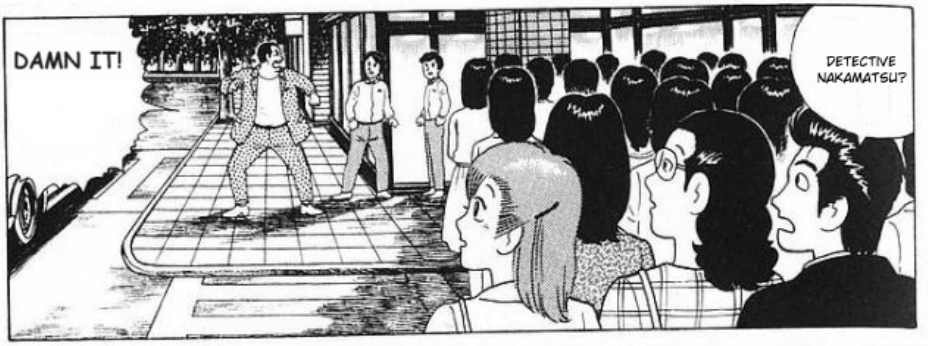
WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL! CAN'T I JUST GET A LITTLE TIP? IS THIS HOW YOU TREAT CUSTOMERS?
YOU'RE NO CUSTOMER, YOU'RE PROBABLY A SPY FROM SOME ICE CREAM PARLOR!
HE'S AN INDUSTRIAL SPY WHO CAME TO STEAL OUR TRADE SECRETS!

4

W-WHAT DID YOU SAY!
DO YOU THINK I'M SOME KIND OF THIEF?


YOU KNOW THIS PERSON? HE CAUSED A SCENE AT A DIFFERENT ICE CREAM PARLOR YESTERDAY AS WELL.
OH! IT'S DETECTIVE NAKAMATSU FROM THE GINZA POLICE STATION.
HMM?


DAMN IT!
DETECTIVE NAKAMATSU?

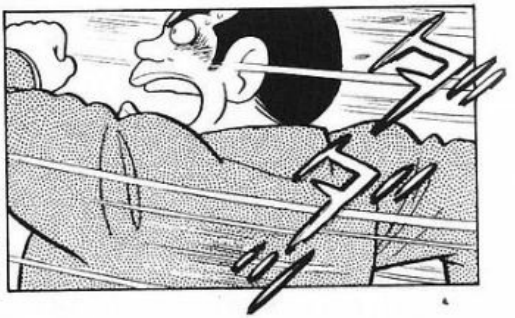
WHOA!

HEY THERE, NAKAMATSU!

5

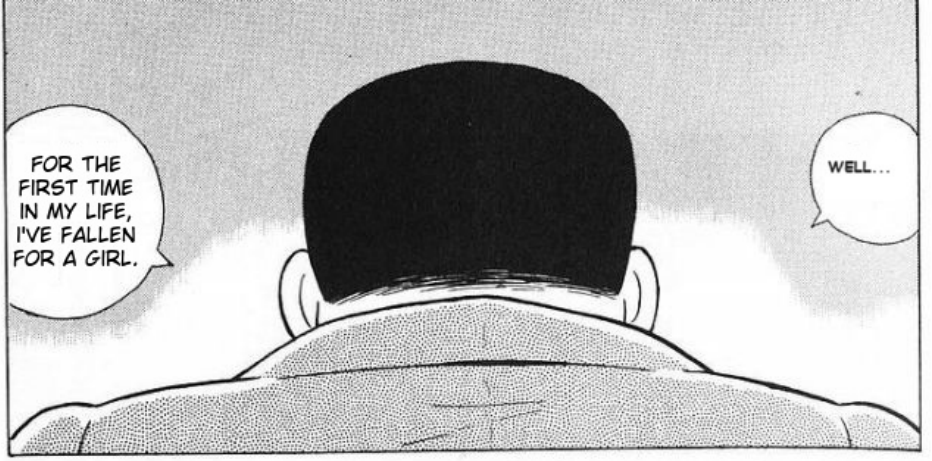
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, I WONDER...
HEY THERE, NAKAMATSU-SAN... WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

OH NO!!!!
HEY THERE!



4

THEY EVEN CAUGHT WIND OF THAT?!
RUMOR HAS IT YOU WENT TO AN ICE CREAM SHOP IN HARAJUKU.
IT'S EMBARRASSING TO BE SEEN LIKE THAT...
6
.....
I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LIKE SWEET STUFF ANYWAY, NAKAMATSU-SAN...
WELL, THE THING IS...
W-WELL, YOU SEE...
HUH?
PROMISE YOU WON'T LAUGH, OKAY?
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?


FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I'VE FALLEN FOR A GIRL.
WELL...

NO WAY!
PUWA HA HA! DETECTIVE NAKAMATSU HAS A CRUSH ON A LADY!
IF YOU DON'T STOP YOUR LAUGHING, I'LL MAKE YOU!

7

もうやめなはれ
THESE GUYS ARE SUCH A PAIN IN THE NECK, I TELL YA!

I CAN'T STOP LAUGHING!!! IT'S SO FUNNY THAT YOU HAVE A CRUSH ON A GIRL!!! HAHAHAHAHA!!!
HAHAHA!
BUT CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? TOUGH-ASS NAILS INSPECTOR NAKAMATSU HAS FALLEN HEAD OVER HEELS FOR A WOMAN!
I CAN'T STOP!!! HAHAHAHA HAHAHAHA!

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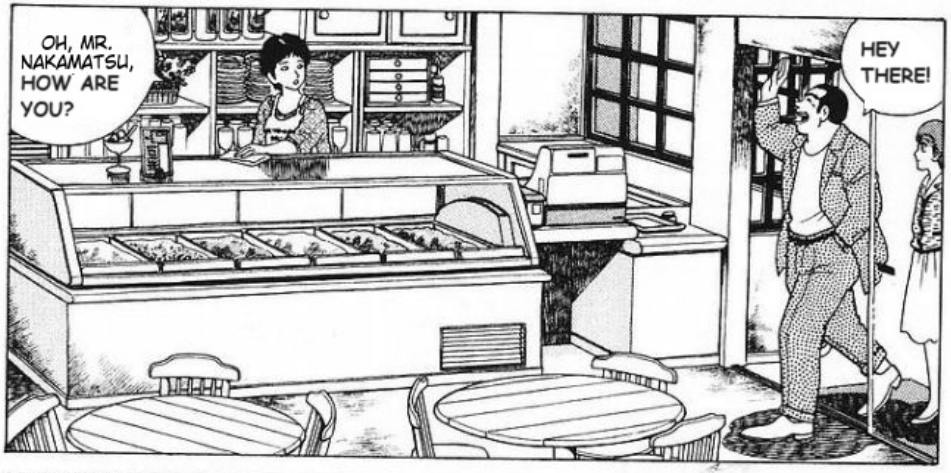
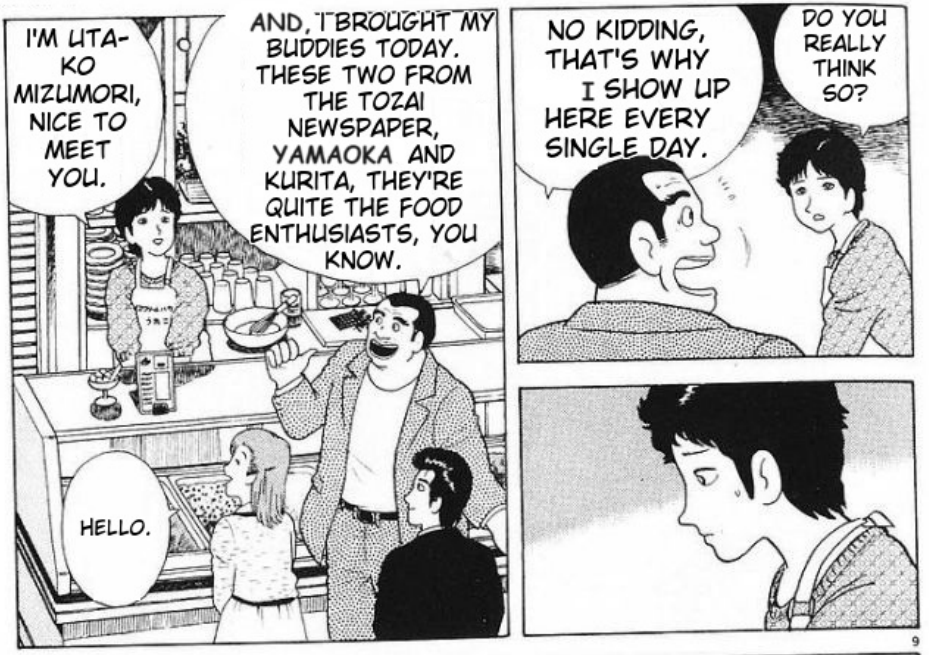

OH, MR. NAKAMATSU, HOW ARE YOU?
HEY THERE!

NOT VERY IMPRESSIVE, HONESTLY. I HAVE TRIED SEVERAL DIFFERENT FLAVORS AND STILL THE SAME RESULT...
HMM, THAT'S STRANGE, MS. UTAKO. YOUR ICE CREAM IS SO GOOD!

SO, HOW'S THE SALES GOING?

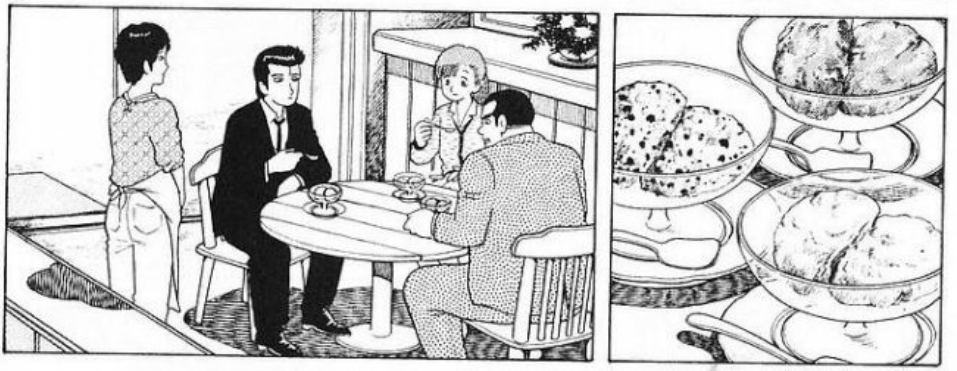

I'M UTA-KO MIZUMORI, NICE TO MEET YOU.
AND, I BROUGHT MY BUDDIES TODAY. THESE TWO FROM THE TOZAI NEWSPAPER, YAMAOKA AND KURITA, THEY'RE QUITE THE FOOD ENTHUSIASTS, YOU KNOW.
HELLO.
NO KIDDING, THAT'S WHY I SHOW UP HERE EVERY SINGLE DAY.
DO YOU REALLY THINK SO?

WELL, THAT'S EXACTLY WHY I BROUGHT THESE TWO HERE.
OH, I'M THRILLED! THIS WILL BE SOME AMAZING PUBLICITY!
THEN I'M SURE TOZAI NEWSPAPER WILL DO A FEATURE ON IT!
IF THESE TWO SAY UTA-KO'S ICE CREAM IS DELICIOUS,
?

WHAT? WHY, AFTER ALL THE TROUBLE I WENT THROUGH TO SET THIS UP?!
BUT, I CAN'T GRANT THAT REQUEST.
MR. NAKAMATSU, YOU REALLY ARE FOND OF MS. UTAKO, HUH?
WELL, CAN'T BE HELPED, I GUESS.

I'LL GO WITH VANILLA.
WELL THEN, I'LL HAVE THE CHOCOLATE CHIPS.
WELL, AT LEAST LET THEM TRY IT BEFORE YOU TURN US DOWN.
OH... I'LL GO WITH UMM... THE COFFEE FLAVOR.
AND WHAT ABOUT NAKAMATSU-SAN?
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE?

10



MOST ICE CREAMS ARE SWEET AND COLD, YOU KNOW.
IT'S REALLY INDESCRIBABLE, SWEET AND COLD, HUH.
DELICIOUS!

IT'S DELICIOUS, ISN'T IT, RIGHT?
HOW 'BOUT IT?

DETECTIVE NAKAMATSU, WHO USUALLY STRIKES FEAR IN EVERYONE, SUDDENLY SHRINKS IN FRONT OF MIZUMORI.
UH, WELL, THAT'S TRUE.

THE COMMOTION AT THE ICE CREAM PARLOR, YOU SAY?
DET. NAKAMATSU, WHAT WAS THAT COMMOTION AT THE ICE CREAM PARLOR ABOUT? AND WHY DID YOU CALL US HERE TODAY?

11

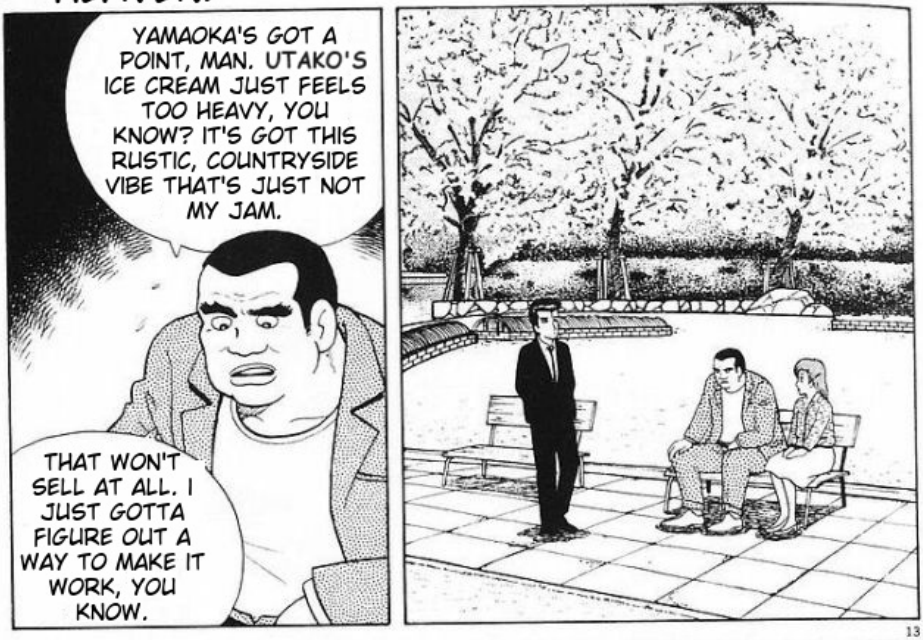
THAT'S RIGHT... IT'S BEEN OVER A MONTH SINCE WE OPENED THE SHOP, BUT WE JUST CAN'T SEEM TO ATTRACT ANY CUSTOMERS... IT'S NOT THE LOCATION, THOUGH. THERE ARE PLENTY OF YOUNG PEOPLE WANDERING AROUND THIS AREA...
IN OTHER WORDS, MY ICE CREAM ISN'T TASTY, IT LACKS APPEAL.

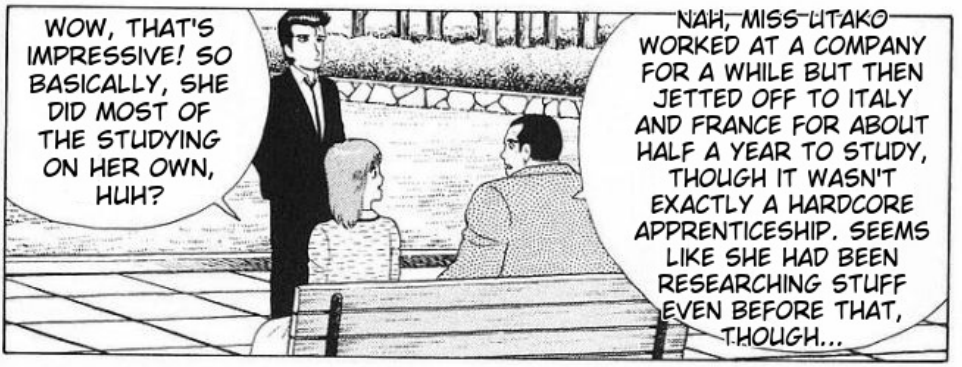
UGH.....

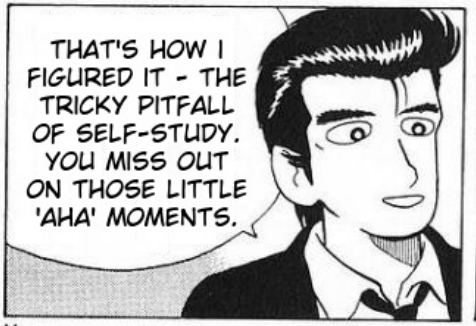
BECAUSE YOU REALIZED DEEP DOWN THAT HER ICE CREAM ISN'T ACTUALLY DELICIOUS, RIGHT?

うたこ
CUSTOMERS ARE HONEST, YOU KNOW. ICE CREAM PARLORS IN ROPPONGI AND AOYAMA HAVE LINES OUT THE DOOR, BUT THIS PLACE HASN'T SEEN A SINGLE CUSTOMER SINCE WE GOT HERE.

I'VE RESEARCHED SUPPLIERS FROM VARIOUS ICE CREAM SHOPS...
SURE, THE INGREDIENTS ARE TOP-NOTCH, BUT THE TASTE AS AN ICE CREAM... FALLS SHORT.
AND YET, THE TASTE AS AN ICE CREAM IS INFERIOR TO THOSE FROM SUCH STORES.
AT MY PLACE, I USE TOP-NOTCH INGREDIENTS LIKE FRESH CREAM, PREMIUM VANILLA, AND EVEN BELGIAN CHOCOLATE THAT I GRATE MYSELF. TRUST ME, IT'S A WHOLE DIFFERENT LEVEL FROM OTHER STORES.
HONESTLY, I DON'T DESERVE TO BE FEATURED IN THE NEWSPAPER.
THERE ARE SO MANY SLOPPY SHOPS OUT THERE, TRYING TO COMPENSATE FOR THE LACK OF FAT WITH VEGETABLE OIL, OR CASUALLY USING COMPOUND CHOCOLATE...
12
UTAKO...
WHY?! WHY IS IT LIKE THIS? I'M PUTTING MY HEART AND SOUL INTO THIS...


YAMAOKA'S GOT A POINT, MAN. UTAKO'S ICE CREAM JUST FEELS TOO HEAVY, YOU KNOW? IT'S GOT THIS RUSTIC, COUNTRYSIDE VIBE THAT'S JUST NOT MY JAM.
THAT WON'T SELL AT ALL. I JUST GOTTA FIGURE OUT A WAY TO MAKE IT WORK, YOU KNOW.
13
UTAKO IS THE NIECE OF MY KENDO SENSEI, AND EVER SINCE HIS WIFE PASSED AWAY TWO YEARS AGO, SHE'S BEEN COMING TO TAKE CARE OF HIM, YOU SEE...
HMM... WELL, NOW...
WHAT'S THE STORY BEHIND YOUR CONNECTION TO UTAKO, ANYWAY?
DID SHE TRAIN AT SOME SHOP BEFORE THIS?
BUT ALAS, AFTER HER OLD MAN PASSED AWAY LAST YEAR, SHE FINALLY TOOK THE PLUNGE AND TURNED THE PLACE INTO AN ICE CREAM PARLOR, A DREAM SHE'D BEEN NURSING FOR YEARS.
MISS UTAKO'S OLD MAN USED TO RUN A SHOE STORE RIGHT HERE WHERE THIS SHOP STANDS NOW.
HMM... SO, WHEN DID UTAKO-SAN START THAT SHOP?


WOW, THAT'S IMPRESSIVE! SO BASICALLY, SHE DID MOST OF THE STUDYING ON HER OWN, HUH?
NAH, MISS UTAKO WORKED AT A COMPANY FOR A WHILE BUT THEN JETTED OFF TO ITALY AND FRANCE FOR ABOUT HALF A YEAR TO STUDY, THOUGH IT WASN'T EXACTLY A HARDCORE APPRENTICESHIP. SEEMS LIKE SHE HAD BEEN RESEARCHING STUFF EVEN BEFORE THAT, THOUGH...

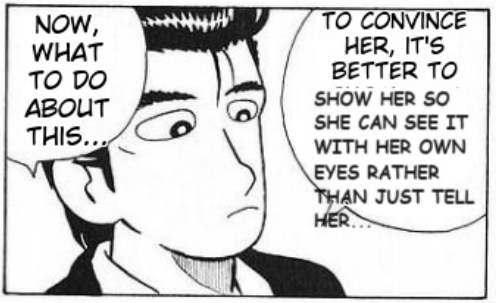

THAT'S HOW I FIGURED IT - THE TRICKY PITFALL OF SELF-STUDY. YOU MISS OUT ON THOSE LITTLE 'AHA' MOMENTS.

WHEN YOU DO THINGS ON YOUR OWN, YOU HATE HAVING TO BOW YOUR HEAD AND ASK OTHERS FOR HELP, HUH!...
IT'S JUST THAT STUBBORNNESS TYPICAL OF FOLKS FROM THE DOWNTOWN TOKYO, I RECKON.

14

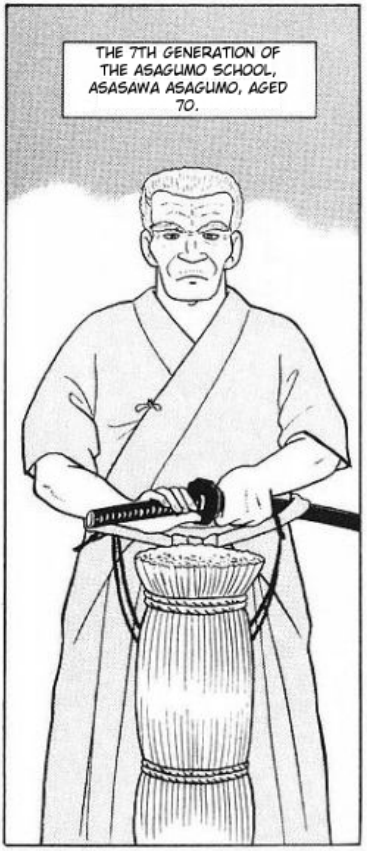
TELL ME WHAT IT IS!!!!

SO, IT'S JUST ABOUT A LITTLE KNACK, HUH? DOES THAT MEAN YOU'VE SPOTTED WHERE MISS UTAKO'S ICE CREAM LACKS FLAVOR, EH?
SURE.


NOW, WHAT TO DO ABOUT THIS...
TO CONVINCE HER, IT'S BETTER TO SHOW HER SO SHE CAN SEE IT WITH HER OWN EYES RATHER THAN JUST TELL HER...

SO, INSPECTOR NAKAMATSU, YOU'RE QUITE SKILLED IN KENDO, HUH?
.....
A LITTLE BIT OF KORYU IAIJUTSU...
WHAT ABOUT REAL SWORDS?
WELL, NOT MANY PEOPLE AT THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT CAN MATCH UP TO ME IN A FIGHT...
HMM...
15
WELL, I'VE GOT AN INTERESTING IDEA THEN. HOW ABOUT INSPECTOR NAKAMATSU CAPTURES MS. UTAKO'S HEART?
WELL, THAT'S IMPRESSIVE!
HOW AM I GOING TO DO THAT?!
WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ICE CREAM AND DRAWING A SWORD?

16


THE 7TH GENERATION OF THE ASAGUMO SCHOOL, ASASAWA ASAGUMO, AGED 70.

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AS EXPECTED!!
AMAZING!!

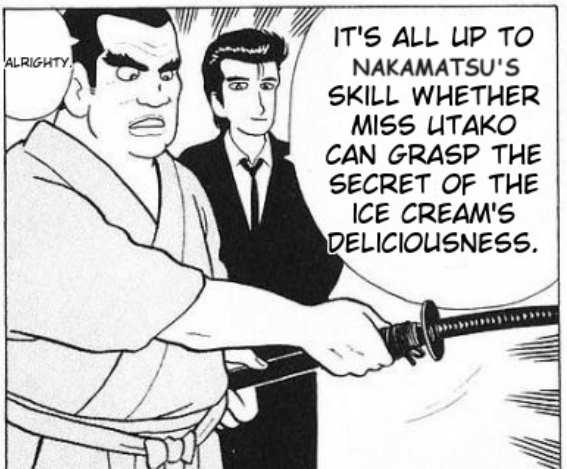
THE CROSS-SECTION OF THE STRAW I CUT IS UNEVEN IN PLACES, BUT THE ONE CUT BY NAKAMATSU IS MAINTAINING A PERFECT CIRCLE. SMOOTHLY, EFFORTLESSLY, HE'S WIELDING THE SWORD. IT'S TRULY POLISHED AND SHARP.
IF A HUMAN WERE TO BE SLASHED BY ME, THEY'D FEEL PAIN, BUT IF THEY WERE SLASHED BY NAKAMATSU, THEY PROBABLY WOULDN'T EVEN FEEL BEING CUT.

FINALLY, I'VE BEEN SURPASSED BY NAKAMATSU... LOOK AT THIS CROSS-SECTION.

18

YES...
GOOD, THAT LEVEL OF SKILL IS NECESSARY... ALRIGHT, PLEASE.

FOODIE HEAVEN!



YOU HAVE FEELINGS FOR ME?
HUH?
IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT SLICING SKILLFULLY, IT'S ABOUT REVEALING HIS FEELINGS FOR YOU, MS. UTAKO.
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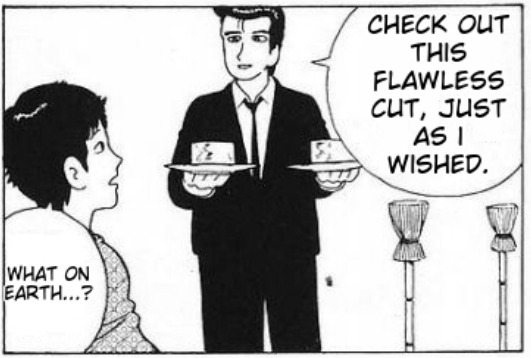
WHOA! THIS IS THE DEFINITION OF LIGHTNING-FAST PRECISION!
ABSOLUTELY STUNNING!

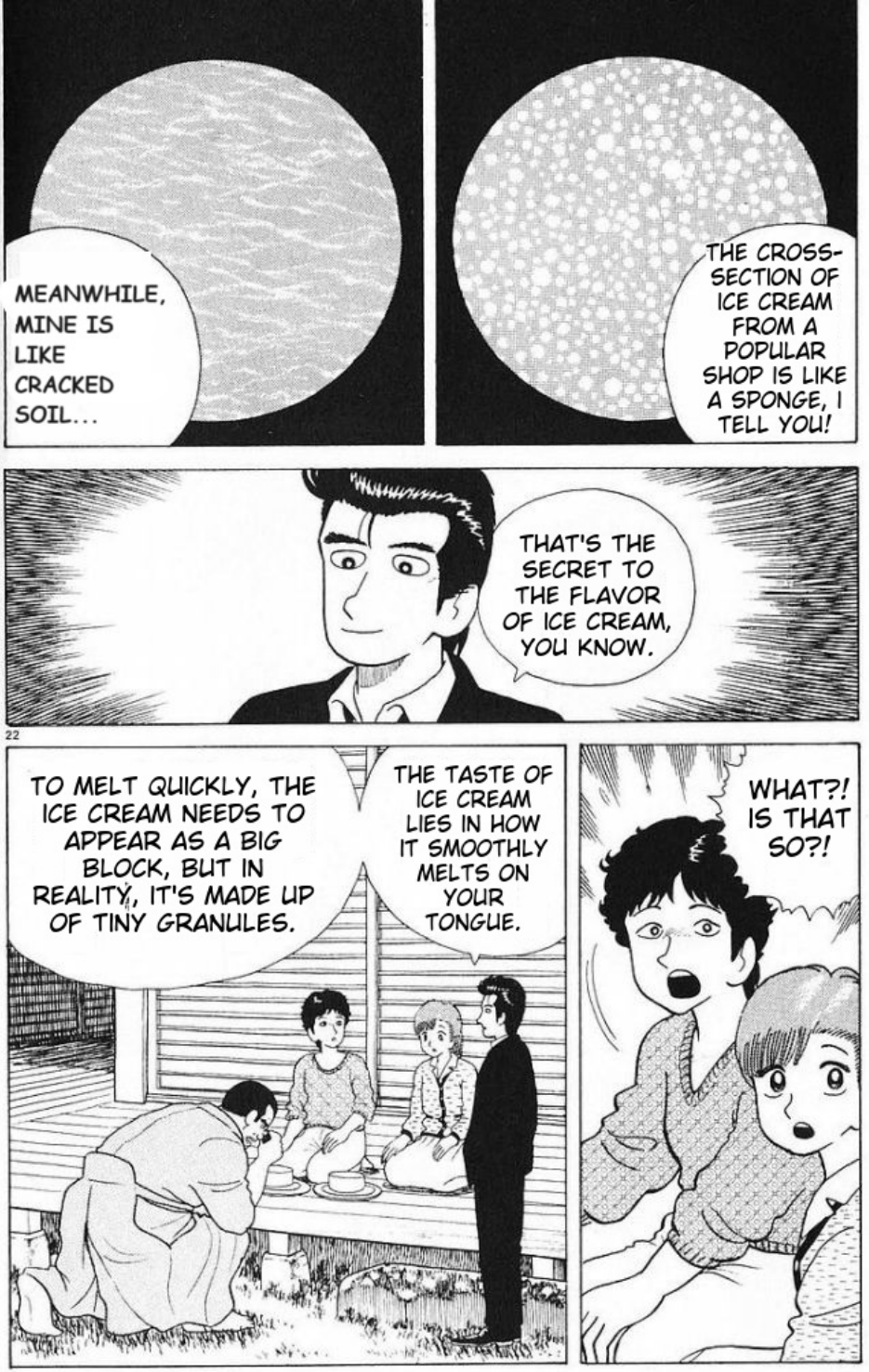

CHECK OUT THIS FLAWLESS CUT, JUST AS I WISHED.
WHAT ON EARTH...?

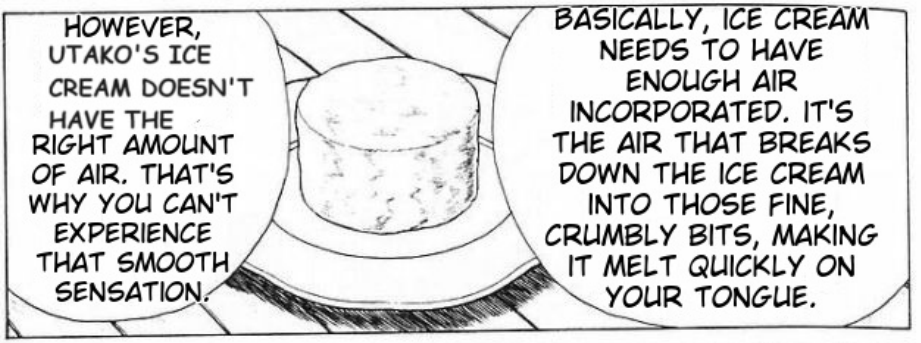
THIS LEGENDARY SWORD IS UNPARALLELED, NOT A HINT OF CLOUDINESS EVEN AT ITS TIP.

CAN YOU SPOT ANYTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY?
WHAT IN THE WORLD...?

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

LET'S USE THIS MAGNIFYING GLASS.


MEANWHILE, MINE IS LIKE CRACKED SOIL...
THE CROSS-SECTION OF ICE CREAM FROM A POPULAR SHOP IS LIKE A SPONGE, I TELL YOU!
THAT'S THE SECRET TO THE FLAVOR OF ICE CREAM, YOU KNOW.
22
TO MELT QUICKLY, THE ICE CREAM NEEDS TO APPEAR AS A BIG BLOCK, BUT IN REALITY, IT'S MADE UP OF TINY GRANULES.
THE TASTE OF ICE CREAM LIES IN HOW IT SMOOTHLY MELTS ON YOUR TONGUE.
WHAT?! IS THAT SO?!


HOWEVER, UTAKO'S ICE CREAM DOESN'T HAVE THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF AIR. THAT'S WHY YOU CAN'T EXPERIENCE THAT SMOOTH SENSATION.
BASICALLY, ICE CREAM NEEDS TO HAVE ENOUGH AIR INCORPORATED. IT'S THE AIR THAT BREAKS DOWN THE ICE CREAM INTO THOSE FINE, CRUMBLY BITS, MAKING IT MELT QUICKLY ON YOUR TONGUE.

DESPITE HAVING GREAT FLAVOR, LACKING AIR MAKES IT FEEL HEAVIER ON THE TONGUE. EVEN WITH INGREDIENTS FAR SUPERIOR TO OTHERS, THE FINAL ICE CREAM FALLS SHORT IN TASTE.
UTAKO, YOUR BEING EARNEST AND USING TOP-NOTCH INGREDIENTS, ACHIEVES THAT RICH FLAVOR.

23

WHEN FIRMING UP THE ICE CREAM, IT'S ESSENTIAL TO CHURN IT THOROUGHLY WHILE FREEZING. ICE CREAM MACHINES ARE USUALLY EQUIPPED WITH A CHURNER... BUT...
I REALIZE NOW I WASN'T UTILIZING THE MACHINE PROPERLY, AND I MADE A WRONG CHOICE IN SELECTING IT.

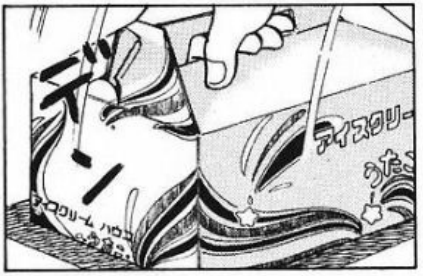
I USED TO THINK IT'S ALL ABOUT HAVING GOOD INGREDIENTS TO MAKE IT DELICIOUS... OH, HOW WRONG I WAS...

HEY... I'VE BEEN MISSING A CRUCIAL POINT, THE IMPORTANCE OF AIR... IT'S ALL ABOUT THE AIR, WHO KNEW, RIGHT?

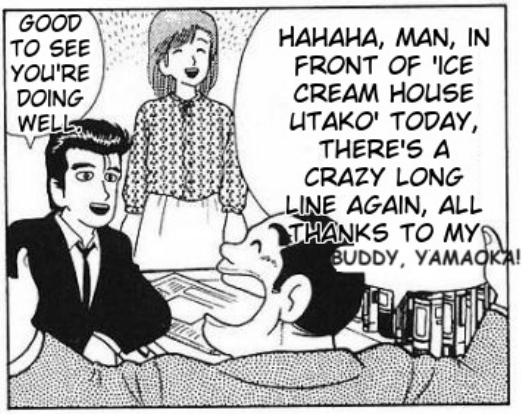
!
I MEAN, SELF-STUDY IS GREAT AND ALL, BUT I WISH THERE WAS MORE FLEXIBILITY, LIKE LEARNING FROM DETECTIVE NAKAMATSU AND TAKING ON AN APPRENTICESHIP AT THE PERFECT MOMENT.
WITH GOOD INGREDIENTS AND TRAPPING THE AIR JUST RIGHT, WE CAN MAKE ICE CREAM TASTIER THAN ANY OTHER SHOP OUT THERE!
STILL, THIS SHOULD BE JUST FINE, RIGHT?
WELL... YOU SEE...
NAKAMATSU-SAN, DOING THIS FOR ME...
24
OH, YES!
I CAN'T BELIEVE SOME PEOPLE PREFER FLUFFY, AIRY FILLINGS OVER SOMETHING RICH AND DECADENT. IT'S LIKE LISTENING TO YOUNGSTERS THESE DAYS...
HOWEVER...

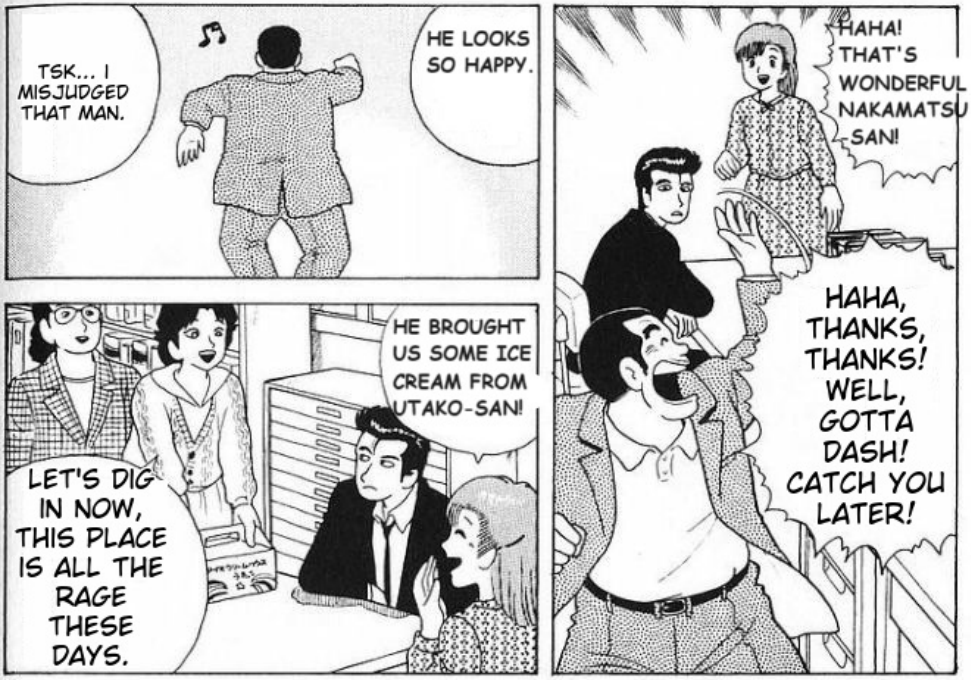
MR. NAKAMATSU!

WELL, WELL, LOOK WHO IT IS!



THANK YOU FOR HELPING UTAKO! IT MEANS A LOT TO ME!!!
OW...


GOOD TO SEE YOU'RE DOING WELL.
HAHAHA, MAN, IN FRONT OF 'ICE CREAM HOUSE UTAKO' TODAY, THERE'S A CRAZY LONG LINE AGAIN, ALL THANKS TO MY BUDDY, YAMAOKA!


TSK... I MISJUDGED THAT MAN.
HE LOOKS SO HAPPY.
HAHA! THAT'S WONDERFUL NAKAMATSU SAN!
HAHA, THANKS, THANKS! WELL, GOTTA DASH! CATCH YOU LATER!
HE BROUGHT US SOME ICE CREAM FROM UTAKO-SAN!
LET'S DIG IN NOW, THIS PLACE IS ALL THE RAGE THESE DAYS.

26

I'VE HAD MY FILL OF SWEETS WITH DETECTIVE NAKAMATSU AROUND.
WHAT ABOUT MR. YAMAOKA?

第3話
茶人といちご

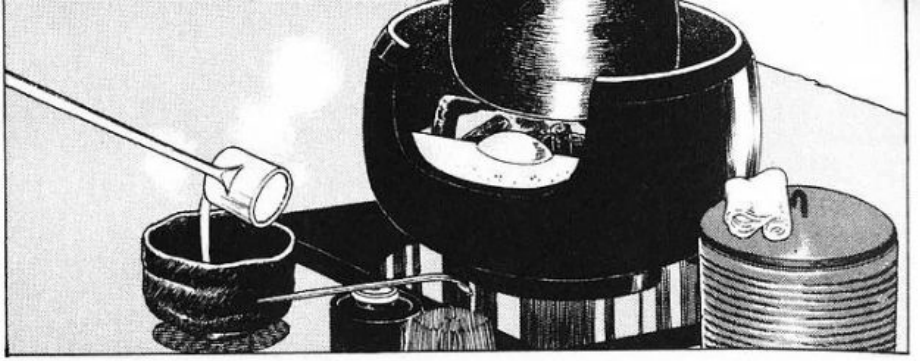
七階催物広場
大京都展
4月 28 29 30 日
NEW GINZA
大京都展

2

大京都展
I MANAGED TO CHARM A FEW LONGSTANDING ESTABLISHMENTS THAT HAD NEVER SET FOOT IN TOKYO BEFORE. CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? I CONVINCED THEM TO MAKE THE LEAP!
CHECK IT OUT! I EVEN PERSUADED SOME ICONIC KYOTO BRANDS TO EXPAND AND SET UP SHOP HERE. ISN'T THAT A STROKE OF GENIUS?

HEY NOW, DON'T COMPARE ME TO A TURTLE, COME ON!
I BET THE FOLKS IN KYOTO WERE PRETTY FLUSTERED WHEN PRESIDENT ITAYAMA CAME IN WITH THE SNAPPY SALES PITCH.
SO, HOW ARE THINGS GOING WITH HIM?
HAHA, IT SEEMS HAVING A LOVER IN THE RICE CRACKER BUSINESS MAKES YOU NOTICE RICE CRACKERS MORE, HUH.
THESE ARE FROM 'DAICHI SENBEI,'
3
BUT HEY, NOT ALL RICE CRACKERS ARE SWEET, YOU KNOW.
WHOA, YOU'RE QUITE THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER, YOUNG LADY.
WELL, IF YOU'RE EXPECTING ME TO BE AS FRAGILE AS A RICE CRACKER JUST BECAUSE HE'S IN THE SNACK BUSINESS, SORRY TO DISAPPOINT, BUT WE'RE AS SWEET AS HONEY PALS.

HUH? DID I SAY SOMETHING BAD?
WELL, JUST TASTE IT.
WELL, WHY NOT TRY SOME FOR YOURSELF.
THIS RICE CRACKER IS SOMETHING YOU WON'T FIND IN TOKYO.
IT MELTS IN YOUR MOUTH, YOU KNOW.
IT'S SWEET!
IT'S GOT A NICE, CRISP TEXTURE.
4
THERE'S A MAIKO FROM KYOTO WHO WILL MAKE TEA FOR US.
HEY, LET'S GO OVER THERE!
OH, HOW LOVELY.
LET'S GO, LET'S GO!
BUT IF HANAMURA-SAN MADE IT INSTEAD OF MIMURA-SAN, IT WOULDN'T BE THIS REFINED, IT WOULD BE MUCH MORE RICH AND CLOYINGLY SWEET.
HMM... IT'S A SWEET RICE CRACKER.
HEY!!!



5

WOW, JUST LOOK AT YOU GRACEFULLY MAKING TEA, YOU MUST BE PRACTICING REALLY HARD.
ABSOLUTELY STUNNING... YOUR KIMONO IS TRULY MAGNIFICENT.
6

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL STEAMED BUN.
THIS IS DELICIOUS!
WHOA,
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グチャ
グチャ
グチャ
7
BURP!
……

HERE YOU ARE.
OOH~
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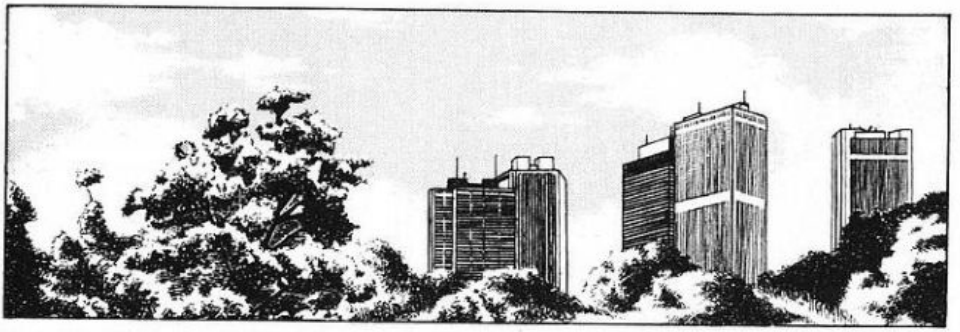
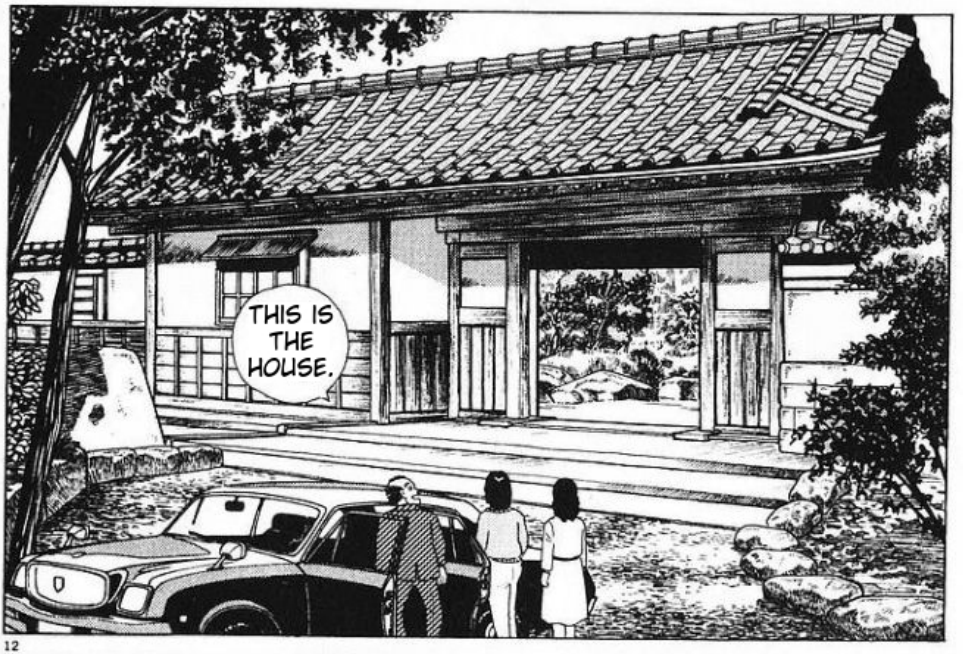
ボゴ
ゴボッ
ゴボ
OH MY!
8
ゴボ
ゴボ
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?

.....
SERIOUSLY, THE BOSS HAS BEEN ACTING WEIRD LATELY, RIGHT?
HEY, ITAYAMA, WHAT'S UP WITH YOU?
HUH, OH YEAH...
HMM...

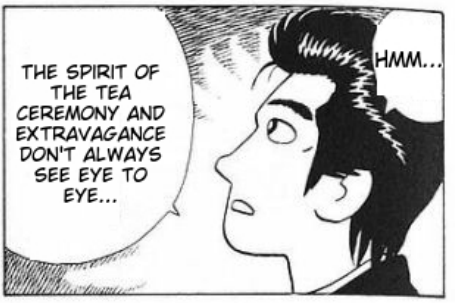



THIS IS THE HOUSE.

12

.....

THIS PLACE REALLY SCREAMS 'TEA MASTER'S RESIDENCE,' DOESN'T IT?
IT'S LIKE A GRAND MANSION!


HMM...
THE SPIRIT OF THE TEA CEREMONY AND EXTRAVAGANCE DON'T ALWAYS SEE EYE TO EYE...

YAMAOKA, DON'T GO STARTING ANY UNNECESSARY TROUBLE WITH YOUR BIG MOUTH TODAY, OKAY?!
I KNOW, OKAY!

HEH, YEAH, I'M CLUELESS ABOUT EVERYTHING, REALLY.
I SEE, SO EVERYONE HERE IS A BEGINNER, HUH?
MASTER MUNENOBU MURAKAMI, 50 YEARS OLD, THE HEAD OF THE SHIN-KORYU SCHOOL OF TEA CEREMONY.
EVEN AMONG THOSE IN THE SAME BUSINESS CIRCLES, THERE'S A DISTINCT DIFFERENCE FOR THOSE WHO HAVE INHERITED PRESTIGIOUS COMPANIES FROM ESTABLISHED ZAIBATSU FAMILIES. THEIR LINEAGE SETS THEM APART, YOU KNOW?
WELL, YOU SEE, I'M A BIT OF A SELF-MADE PERSON, SO...
14
I'LL PERSONALLY TAKE YOU UNDER MY WING AND SHOW YOU THE ROPES, AS A SPECIAL FAVOR SINCE YOU'RE BEING INTRODUCED BY PRESIDENT NANGAWA OF TOHNANDENKI.
IN NORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES, BEGINNERS LIKE YOU WOULD USUALLY BE ASSIGNED TO MY GRANDDISCIPLES FOR TRAINING, BUT...
.....

OH, IT'S NOT A PROBLEM.
I APPRECIATE IT. THANK YOU SO MUCH!
NICE TO MEET YA.
FOR EXAMPLE, TAKE THIS TEACUP...
THERE'S SOMETHING I MUST WARN YOU ALL ABOUT: THE WORLD OF TEA UTENSILS IS A REALM OF EXTRAVAGANCE. THESE ITEMS DON'T COME CHEAP, FOLKS!
15
WHOA, FIFTY MILLION!!
IN THE EARLY EDO PERIOD, A MASTERPIECE LIKE THIS IS WORTH AT LEAST FIFTY MILLION. IT'S A REAL GEM, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT!
JUST LOOKING AT IT BOGGLES THE MIND!
I KNEW TEA UTENSILS WERE EXPENSIVE, BUT...

I'LL TREAT IT WITH CARE.

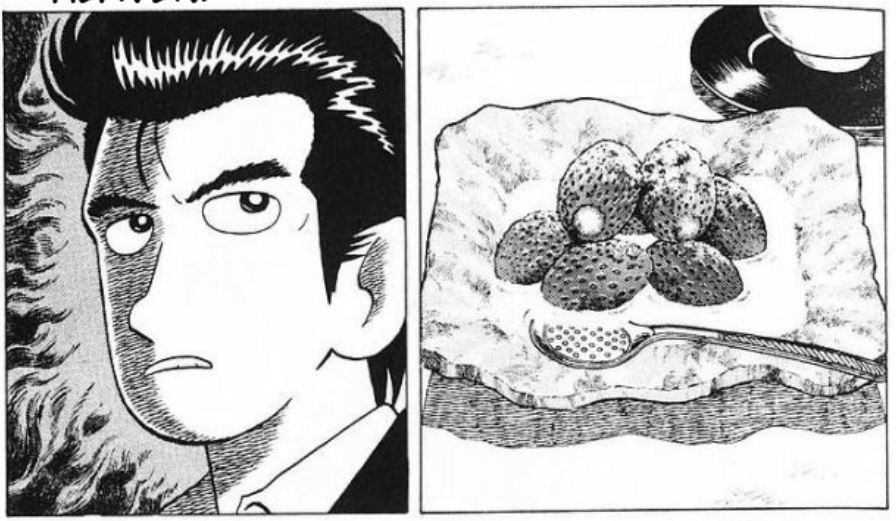
SO PLEASE, HANDLE THESE TOOLS WITH THE UTMOST CARE.
I NEVER HOLD BACK IN SHARING TREASURES LIKE THIS DURING YOUR PRACTICE SESSIONS, FOLKS.
OH, OF COURSE...

16

!

WELL, GO AHEAD AND ENJOY.
OH MY, I ABSOLUTELY ADORE STRAWBERRIES.

FOODIE HEAVEN!



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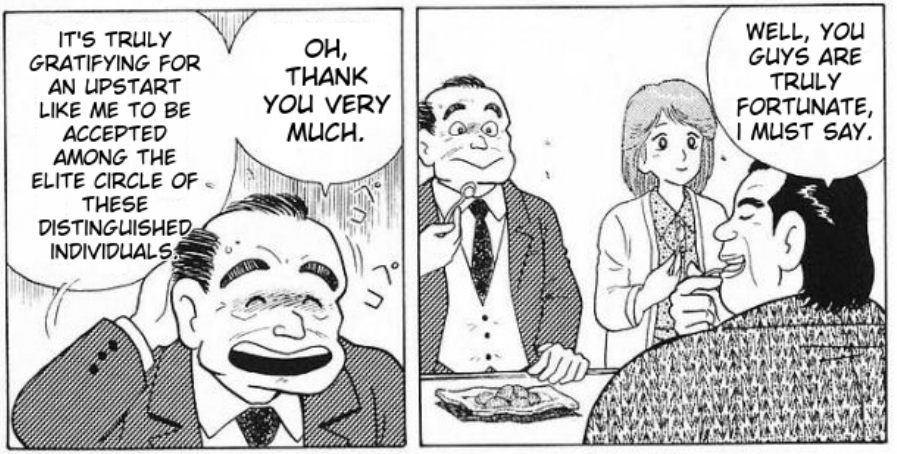


LET'S HEAD BACK, ITAYAMA-SAN. THERE'S NOTHING TO LEARN ABOUT TEA FROM THIS PERSON.

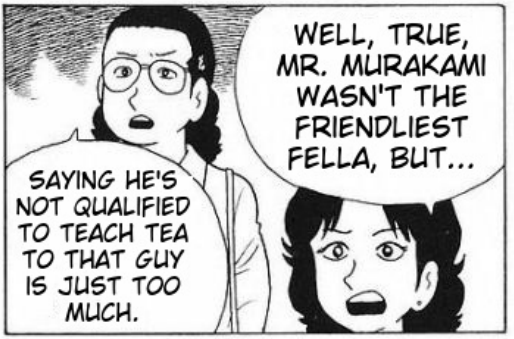
HOW DARE YOU!!!!
WHAT?! OH NO!

WHAT DID YOU SAY, YOUNG MAN?!
YAMAOKA-KUN...
ALRIGHT, EVERYONE, LET'S GO BACK!!

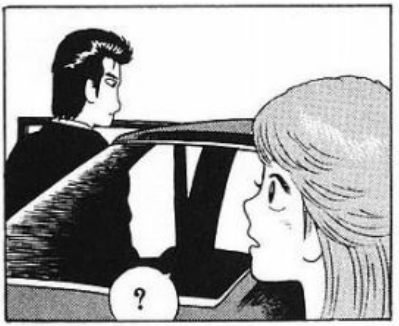
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF TEA. MAYBE YOU SHOULD REREAD SEN NO RIKYŪ'S WORDS ONCE MORE.
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO TEACH TEA TO ANYONE!

WE AIN'T TEACHING TEA TO THE LIKES OF YOU, SO SCRAM, WILL YA!!
GET OUT, YOU RUDE BUNCH!!
I SHOULD NEVER HAVE ALLOWED NAGAWA-SAN TO CONVINCE ME TO TEACH YOU!!!!

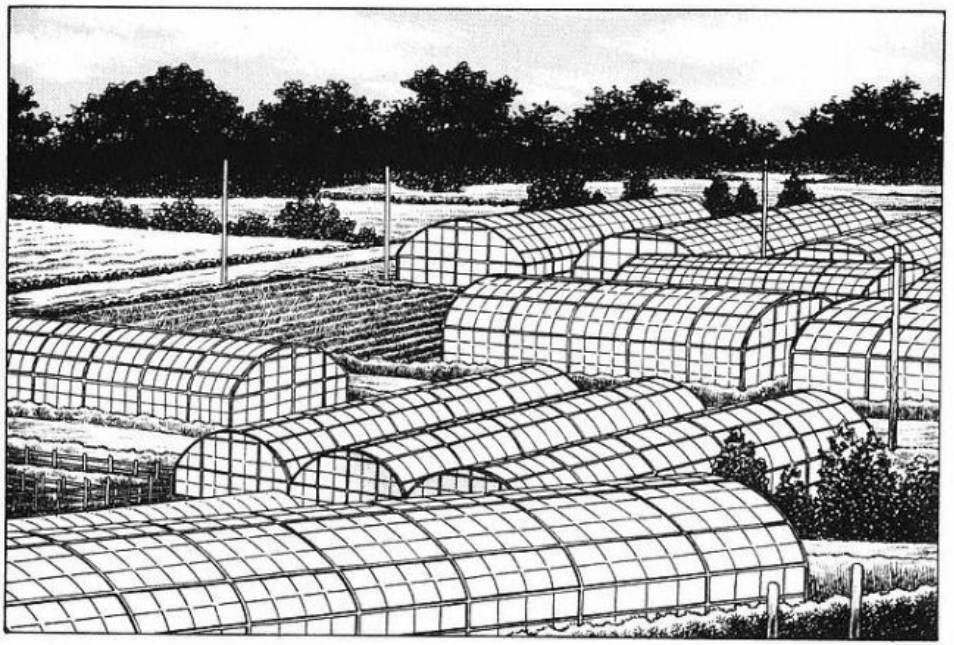
WE PROMISED NOT TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE TODAY, DIDN'T WE!!
WHY DID YOU SAY SUCH A THING!!


WELL, TRUE, MR. MURAKAMI WASN'T THE FRIENDLIEST FELLA, BUT...
SAYING HE'S NOT QUALIFIED TO TEACH TEA TO THAT GUY IS JUST TOO MUCH.

19


?

WOULD YOU MIND STICKING WITH ME FOR A BIT?
NO USE TRYING TO EXPLAIN WITH WORDS.
I GET WHY EVERYONE'S MAD AT ME.

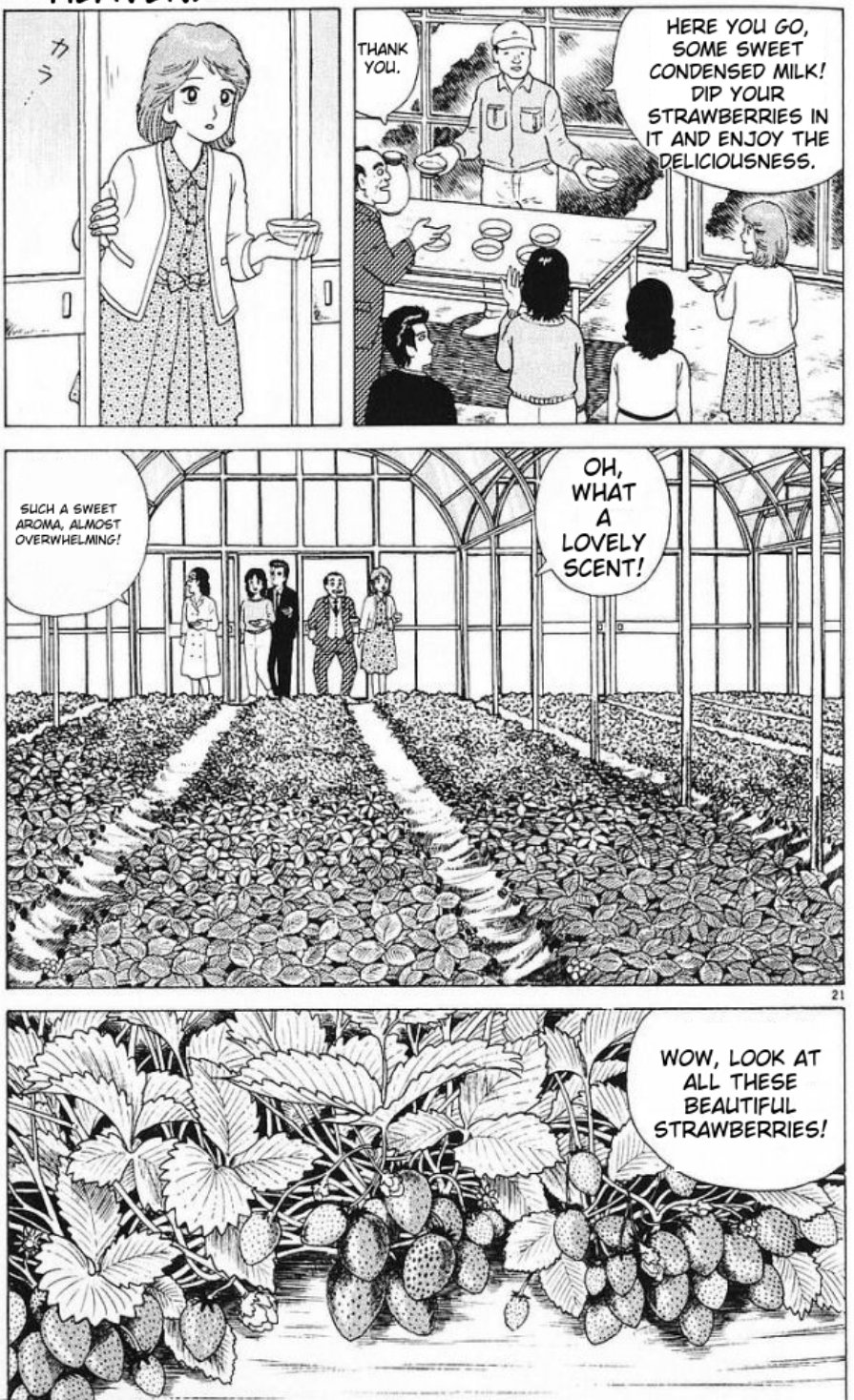


YOU'RE REALLY GOING TO MAKE UP FOR MISSING OUT ON EATING STRAWBERRIES JUST NOW?
STRAWBERRY PICKING?

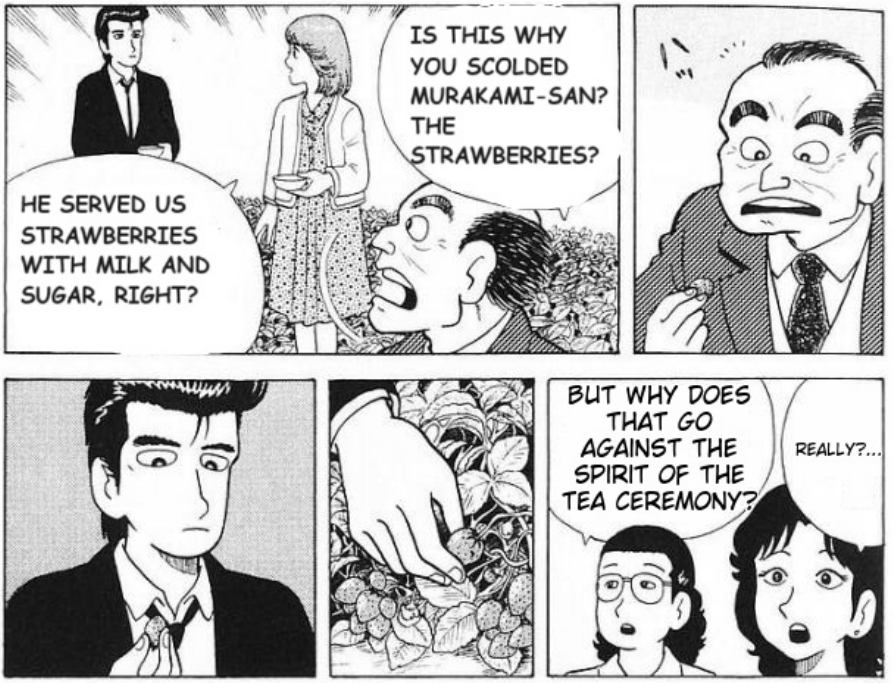
20

YOU SEEM TO HAVE AN ULTERIOR MOTIVE...

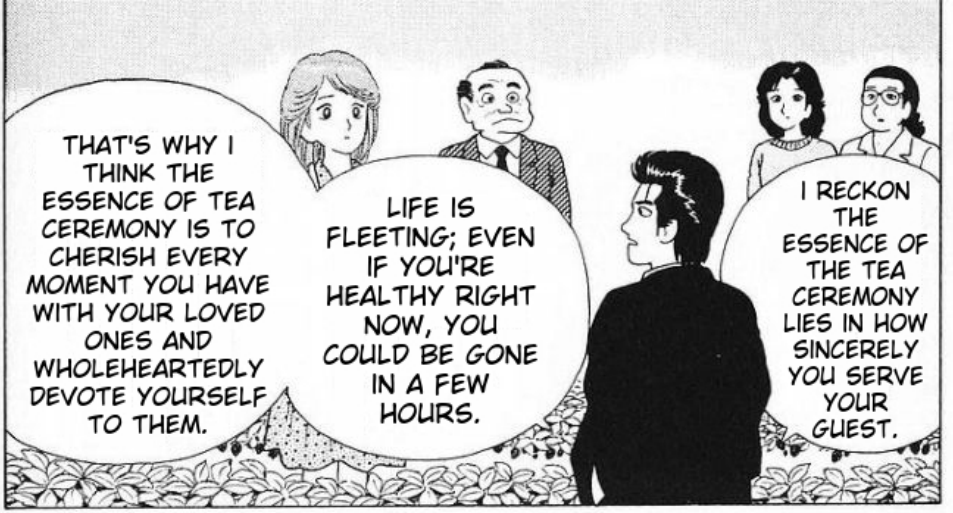
FOODIE HEAVEN!



BON APPÉTIT.
THE SWEETNESS AND AROMA ARE SO INTENSE!
OH MY GOODNESS, THIS IS DELICIOUS!
SO DELICIOUS! A FULLY RIPE STRAWBERRY TRULY TASTES DIFFERENT!
22
SERIOUSLY, THE SWEETNESS AND AROMA OF CONDENSED MILK ARE MUDDLING THE SWEETNESS AND AROMA OF THE STRAWBERRIES!
YOU'RE RUINING THE EXQUISITE FLAVOR OF THE STRAWBERRIES!
HUH? IT'S A SHAME TO PAIR SUCH DELICIOUS STRAWBERRIES WITH OVERLY SWEET CONDENSED MILK.
IT'S BETTER WITHOUT DIPPING ANYTHING!
HERE YOU GO!

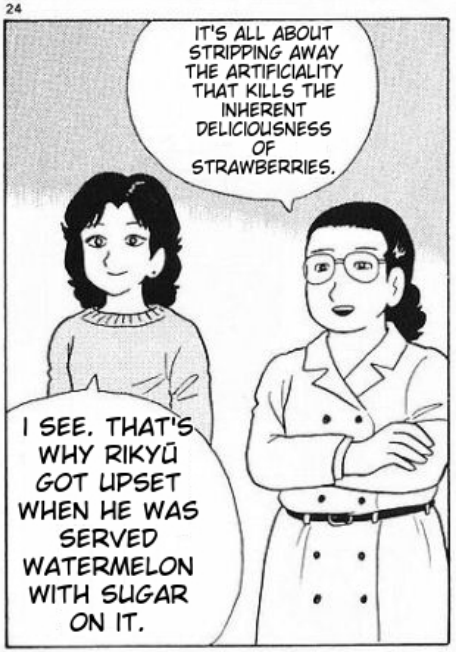

IS THIS WHY YOU SCOLDED MURAKAMI-SAN? THE STRAWBERRIES?
HE SERVED US STRAWBERRIES WITH MILK AND SUGAR, RIGHT?
BUT WHY DOES THAT GO AGAINST THE SPIRIT OF THE TEA CEREMONY?
REALLY?...

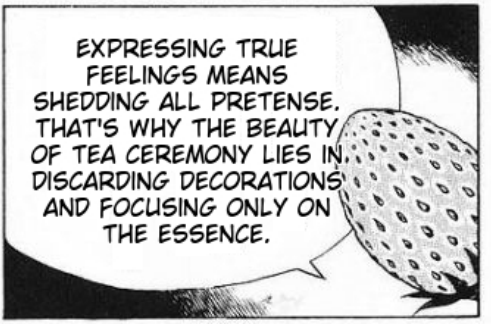
IT'S SAID THAT RIKYU TOLD THE PERSON, 'YOU ARE NOT WORTHY TO DINE WITH ME,' AND LEFT THE SEAT IN A HUFF.
WHEN THE FOUNDER OF THE TEA CEREMONY, RIKYU, WAS INVITED TO A GATHERING AND SERVED WATERMELON WITH SUGAR...

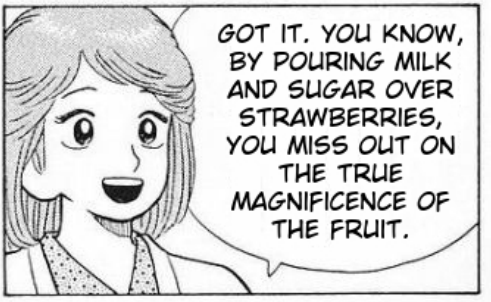

THAT'S WHY I THINK THE ESSENCE OF TEA CEREMONY IS TO CHERISH EVERY MOMENT YOU HAVE WITH YOUR LOVED ONES AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY DEVOTE YOURSELF TO THEM.
LIFE IS FLEETING; EVEN IF YOU'RE HEALTHY RIGHT NOW, YOU COULD BE GONE IN A FEW HOURS.
I RECKON THE ESSENCE OF THE TEA CEREMONY LIES IN HOW SINCERELY YOU SERVE YOUR GUEST.

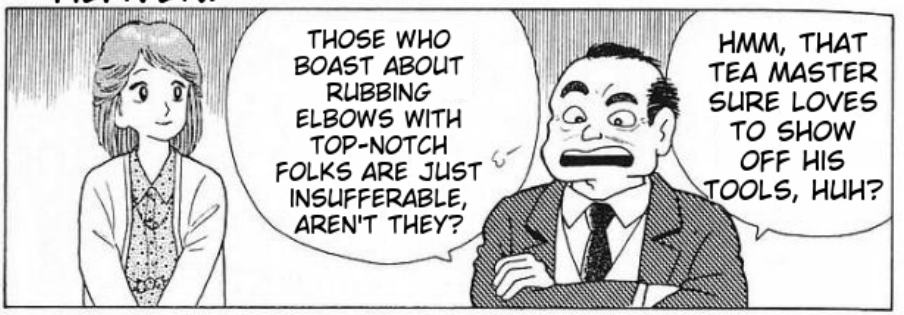
HENCE, I BELIEVE THOSE WHO FLAUNT THEIR EXPENSIVE TEA UTENSILS OR SHOW OFF THEIR ETIQUETTE ARE MISSING THE ESSENCE OF THE TEA CEREMONY.
THE CORE OF TEA CEREMONY IS ABOUT EXPRESSING YOUR TRUE FEELINGS THROUGH SERVING TEA, NOT ABOUT ETIQUETTE OR FANCY UTENSILS.

24

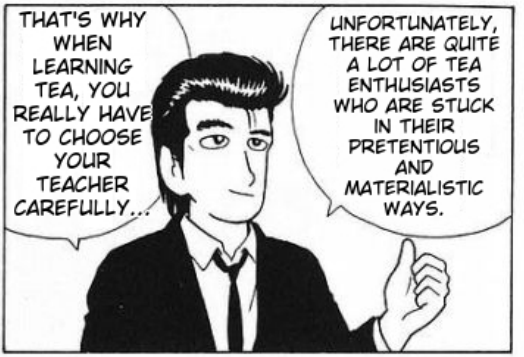

IT'S ALL ABOUT STRIPPING AWAY THE ARTIFICIALITY THAT KILLS THE INHERENT DELICIOUSNESS OF STRAWBERRIES.
I SEE. THAT'S WHY RIKYŪ GOT UPSET WHEN HE WAS SERVED WATERMELON WITH SUGAR ON IT.


EXPRESSING TRUE FEELINGS MEANS SHEDDING ALL PRETENSE. THAT'S WHY THE BEAUTY OF TEA CEREMONY LIES IN DISCARDING DECORATIONS AND FOCUSING ONLY ON THE ESSENCE.


GOT IT. YOU KNOW, BY POURING MILK AND SUGAR OVER STRAWBERRIES, YOU MISS OUT ON THE TRUE MAGNIFICENCE OF THE FRUIT.


THOSE WHO BOAST ABOUT RUBBING ELBOWS WITH TOP-NOTCH FOLKS ARE JUST INSUFFERABLE, AREN'T THEY?
HMM, THAT TEA MASTER SURE LOVES TO SHOW OFF HIS TOOLS, HUH?

I SEE, I SEE... SO, A DISCIPLE HAS THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE THEIR MASTER.


THAT'S WHY WHEN LEARNING TEA, YOU REALLY HAVE TO CHOOSE YOUR TEACHER CAREFULLY...
UNFORTUNATELY, THERE ARE QUITE A LOT OF TEA ENTHUSIASTS WHO ARE STUCK IN THEIR PRETENTIOUS AND MATERIALISTIC WAYS.

IT'S NOT LIKE THE EMPLOYEES GET TO CHOOSE THE PRESIDENT, AFTER ALL.
LUCKY YOU.

HUH?

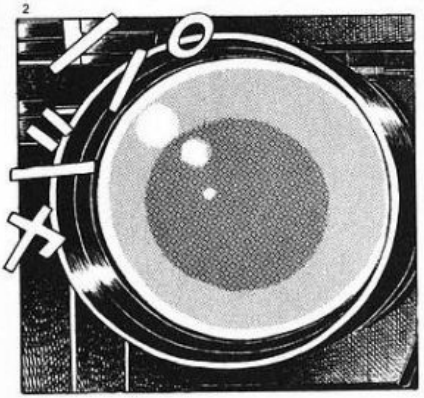
東西新聞社
WHAT'S WITH THE RUDE ATTITUDE?
SUCH AN ATTITUDE, I TELL YOU.
IT'S RARE TO FIND SOMEONE SO DISCONNECTED BETWEEN THEIR WORDS AND ACTIONS, ISN'T IT?
HERE, HAVE SOME TEA.
UH, THANKS...
ズー!
ズズズ

第4話
手先の美

HE WANTS TO CAPTURE THE DAY TO DAY WORK YOU'RE ALL DOING.
THIS IS ARAKAWA-SAN. HE'S THE PHOTOGRAPHER I MENTIONED TO YOU ALL YESTERDAY.
Z...
Z...
Z...

JUST PRETEND I'M NOT HERE, EVERYONE.

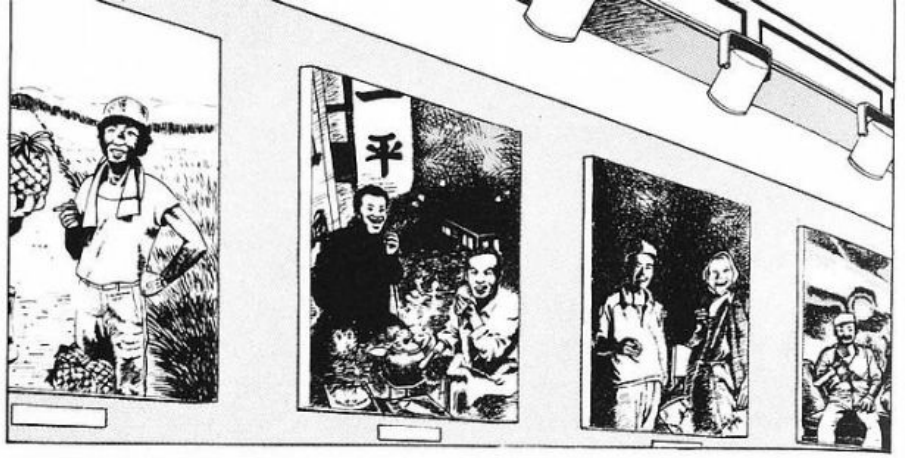
2

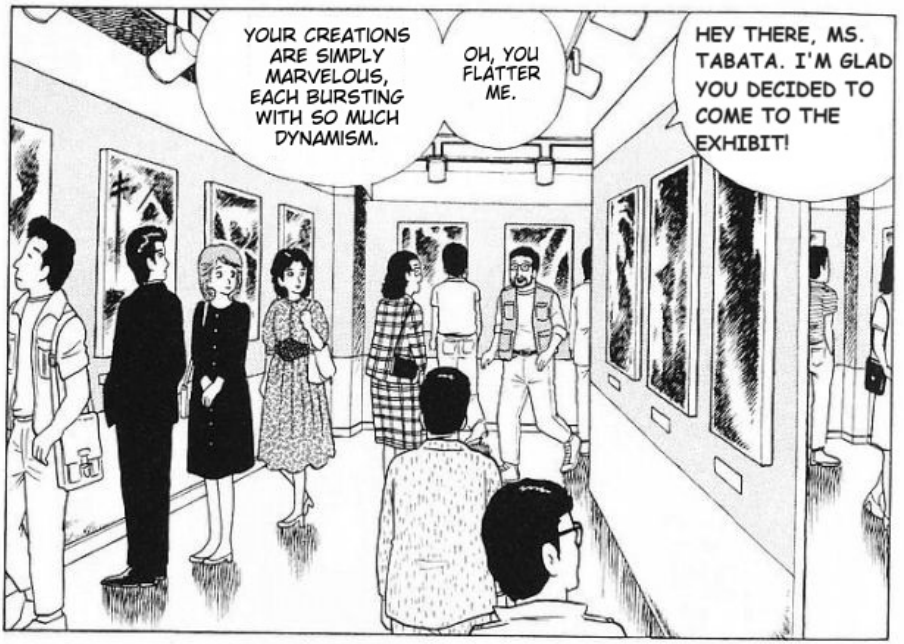


OH NO, I CAN'T CONCENTRATE WITH THE CAMERA AROUND.
I SHOULD'VE DRESSED UP IN BETTER CLOTHES.

……
3
I DON'T REALLY KNOW MUCH ABOUT PHOTOGRAPHY, BUT...
I THINK YOU'LL UNDERSTAND ONCE YOU SEE THEM, PLEASE DO!
HUH, ME?
I'M HAVING AN EXHIBITION OF MY PHOTOS, WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME SEE IT?

HEY, DID YOU SEE ARAKAWA-SAN BLUSHING WHILE TALKING TO TABATA-KUN?
OH, YOU'RE RIGHT, HANAMURA-SAN. SOMEONE'S GOT A CRUSH, IT LOOKS LIKE...
IT SEEMS YOU LIKED TALKING TO THE PHOTOGRAPHER, TABATA.
IF YOU MAKE FUN OF OLD MAIDS, YOU MIGHT END UP BECOMING ONE YOURSELF, LADIES.
DON'T SAY SUCH SILLY THINGS.
OOOH, DO YOU HAVE A CRUSH?!
4
「働く人の写真展」
東銀座画廊
荒川 精作
5月5日～12日
I WOULDN'T MIND GOING TO SEE IT.
...IT'S QUITE A SERIOUS-LOOKING PHOTO EXHIBITION, HUH...

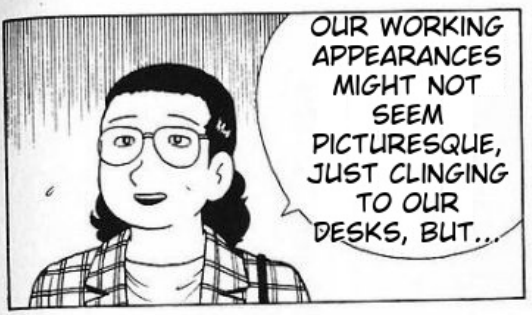



HEY THERE, MS. TABATA. I'M GLAD YOU DECIDED TO COME TO THE EXHIBIT!
OH, YOU FLATTER ME.
YOUR CREATIONS ARE SIMPLY MARVELOUS, EACH BURSTING WITH SO MUCH DYNAMISM.

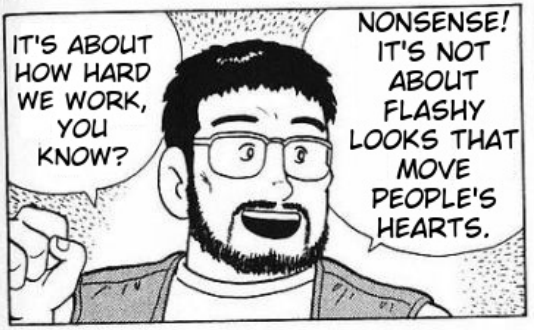
5

IS THAT REALLY TRUE?
I'M DELIGHTED TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT.

YOU'RE QUITE INNOCENT FOR YOUR AGE.
HE TURNED RED AGAIN.

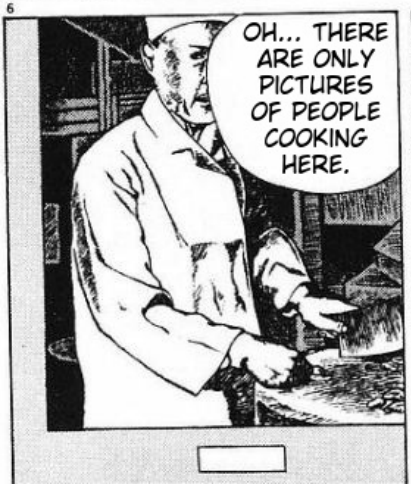

OUR WORKING APPEARANCES MIGHT NOT SEEM PICTURESQUE, JUST CLINGING TO OUR DESKS, BUT...

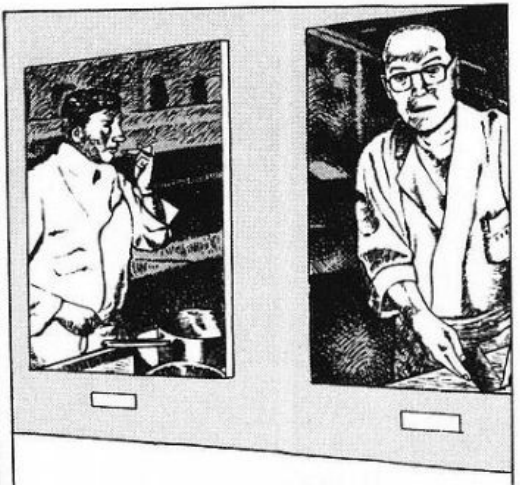
I BELIEVE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SIGHT OF A HUMAN IS WHEN THEY'RE WORKING.
THAT'S WHY I WENT AROUND TAKING PICTURES OF PEOPLE FROM VARIOUS WORKPLACES.


IT'S ABOUT HOW HARD WE WORK, YOU KNOW?
NONSENSE! IT'S NOT ABOUT FLASHY LOOKS THAT MOVE PEOPLE'S HEARTS.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?!
HEY!!!

OH, SO THERE'S ALREADY SOMEONE HERE WHO'S DISQUALIFIED FROM THE START.

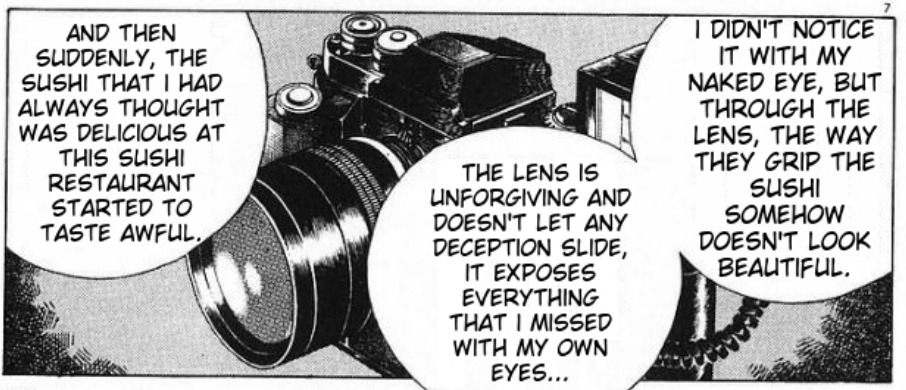

OH... THERE ARE ONLY PICTURES OF PEOPLE COOKING HERE.



I ALWAYS FIND A CHEF'S DEMEANOR WHILE COOKING TO BE SO BEAUTIFUL. THAT'S WHY I ASKED IF I COULD TAKE A PHOTO...
EXACTLY, I'M A FOODIE, AND I'M VERY INTERESTED IN COOKING.

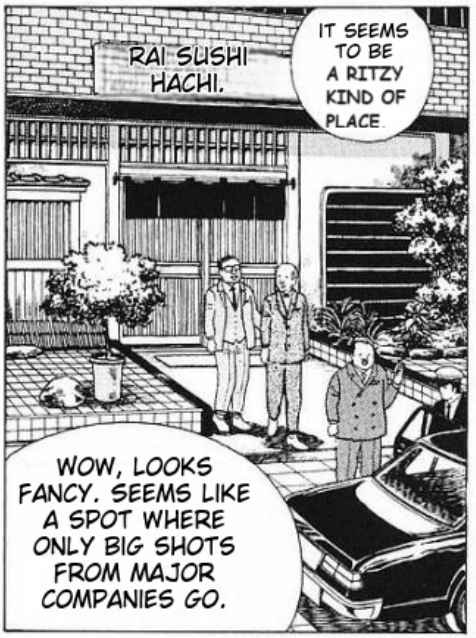
HMM...
THESE TWO ARE IN CHARGE OF THE FOOD IN OUR DEPARTMENT, WORKING ON CREATING THE 'ULTIMATE MENU'.
WELL... IF YOU'RE A FOODIE, YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY HERE.

OH REALLY...?
WELL, YOU SEE, I LOVE SUSHI, AND I WANTED TO CAPTURE THE WORK OF SUSHI CHEFS IN PHOTOS, SO I WENT AROUND HERE AND THERE, BUT I JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GET A GOOD SHOT...
WELL THEN, THERE'S SOMETHING I'D REALLY LIKE YOU TO TELL ME...


AND THEN SUDDENLY, THE SUSHI THAT I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT WAS DELICIOUS AT THIS SUSHI RESTAURANT STARTED TO TASTE AWFUL.
THE LENS IS UNFORGIVING AND DOESN'T LET ANY DECEPTION SLIDE, IT EXPOSES EVERYTHING THAT I MISSED WITH MY OWN EYES...
I DIDN'T NOTICE IT WITH MY NAKED EYE, BUT THROUGH THE LENS, THE WAY THEY GRIP THE SUSHI SOMEHOW DOESN'T LOOK BEAUTIFUL.

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S EYE SURE IS SHARP.
WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT THE TASTE OF SUSHI COULD BE INFLUENCED BY HOW IT'S MADE, HUH?
HMM... WHAT COULD IT BE THAT MAKES MR. ARAKAWA FIND THE ACT OF SUSHI-MAKING UNAPPEALING...
IF IT'S OKAY, WOULD YOU MIND IF MS. TABATA JOINED US AS WELL?
UM...
ALRIGHT, TO FIGURE OUT WHAT MAKES MR. ARAKAWA FEEL THAT WAY, LET'S HIT UP A COUPLE OF SUSHI JOINTS.
OH, NO WORRIES.
OH, I SEE HOW IT IS... TREATING US LIKE A HINDRANCE, HUH.
WELL, WELL... LOOKS LIKE IT.
WELL THEN, LET'S TAG ALONG AS WELL.
HUH? ARE YOU GUYS IN ON THIS TOO...?
OH, WELL, I DON'T KNOW...
8
YOU CAN COME!
NO, NO! THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL!

GINZA.
東映パラス
もんめ
絶賛
Primagaz

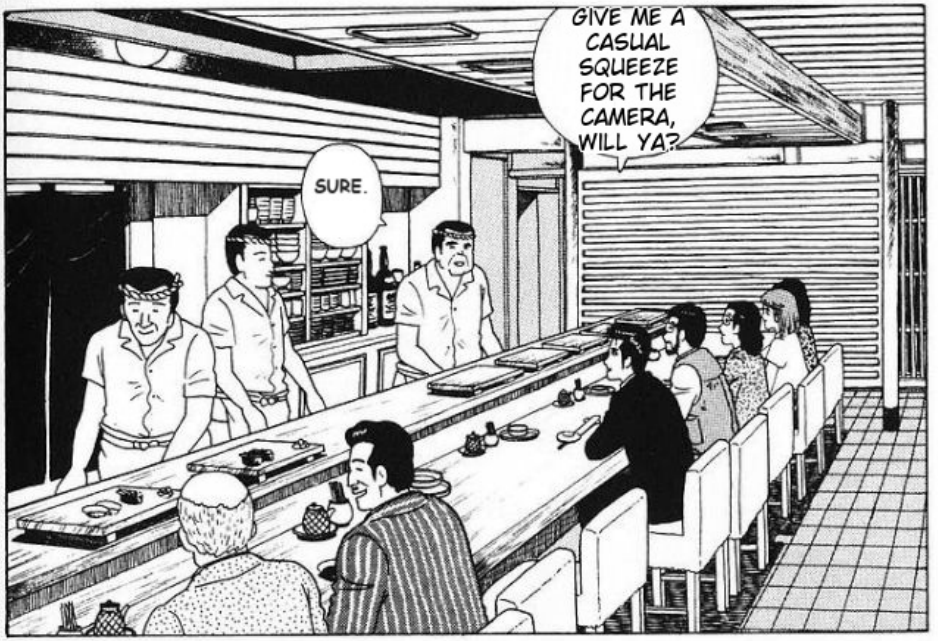

RAI SUSHI HACHI.
IT SEEMS TO BE A RITZY KIND OF PLACE.
WOW, LOOKS FANCY. SEEMS LIKE A SPOT WHERE ONLY BIG SHOTS FROM MAJOR COMPANIES GO.

IN THIS GUIDEBOOK, WE STILL HAVE ABOUT TWO PLACES LEFT TO VISIT,
SO I THINK WE SHOULD START BY CONQUERING THE FIRST ONE, 'SUSHI HACHI'...

9

A GRAND PHOTOGRAPHER, HUH...

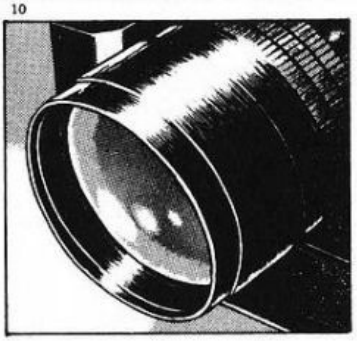
RIGHT?
NO WORRIES, WE'VE GOT A GRAND PHOTOGRAPHER WITH US.

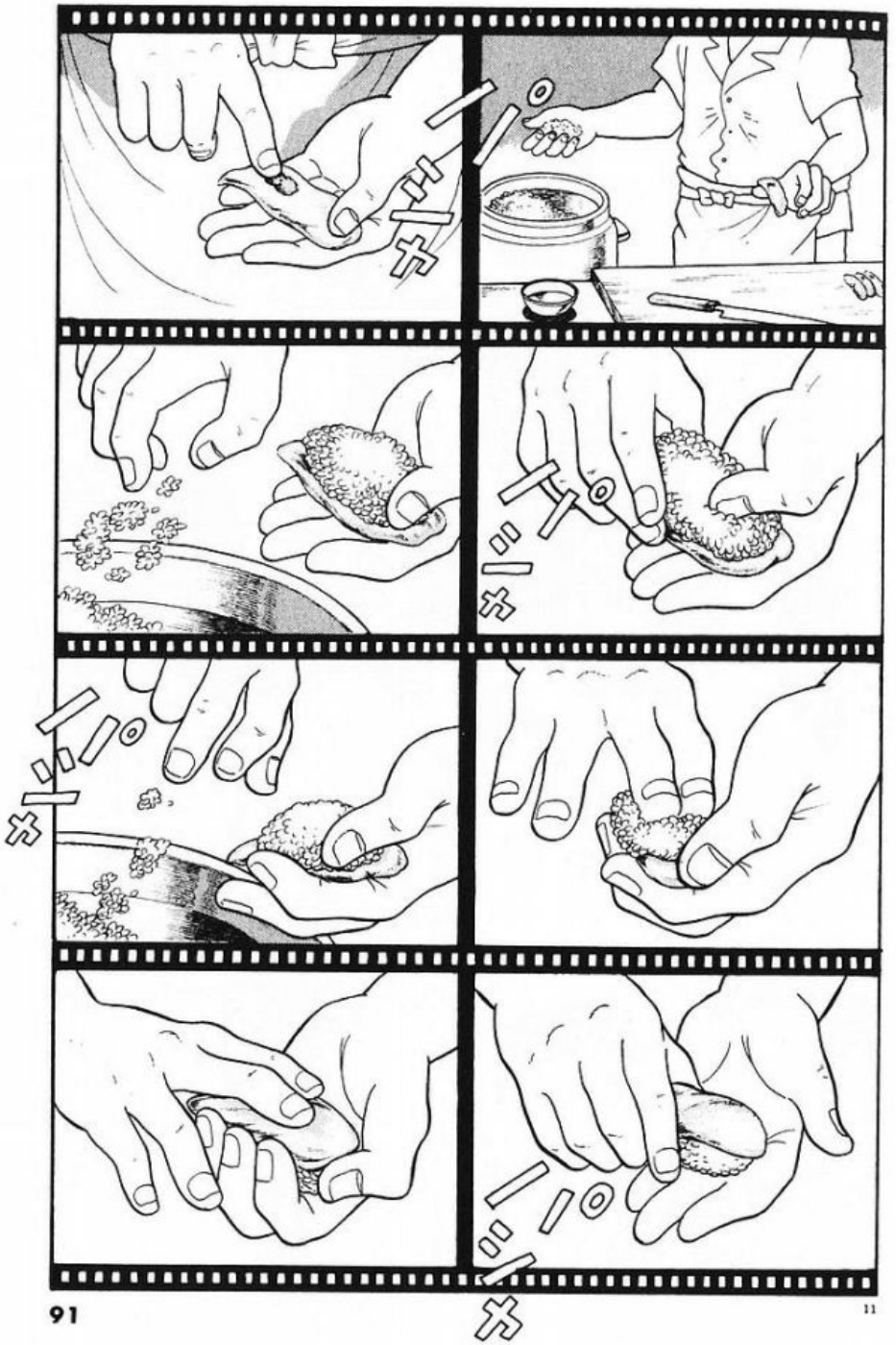

GIVE ME A CASUAL SQUEEZE FOR THE CAMERA, WILL YA?
SURE.

HEY, SNAP A PIC OF ME LOOKING LIKE A TOTAL STUD, WILL YA?
OH? A PHOTO, YOU SAY?

MIND IF I CAPTURE YOU SQUEEZING IT TIGHT?

10

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HERE YOU ARE.
I WONDER.
HMM... I DON'T GET IT...
WELL, THE GUIDEBOOK DOES HAVE A POINT, AFTER ALL.
DELICIOUS.
OOPS.
OH, RIGHT.
NO, WE CAME TO SEE THE ART OF SUSHI-MAKING, NOT JUST TO EAT SUSHI.
12
WHAT'S WRONG WITH IT...
MR. ARAKAWA SEEMS A BIT DOWN... HE SAYS THIS WAY OF SHAPING IS NO GOOD...

NOT UNTIL ARAKAWA-SAN SAYS IT'S FINE...
EATING ONLY TWO TYPES HAS ONLY MADE ME HUNGRIER!

WHAT A DILEMMA...
HMM... IS THAT REALLY THE CASE?

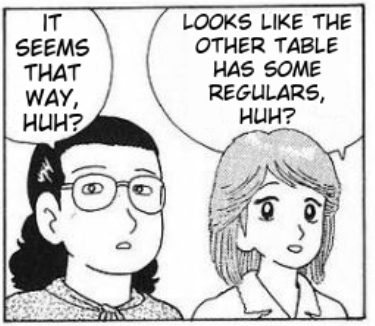
BUT THE WAY THEY HANDLE THE SUSHI AT THE CURRENT PLACE IS JUST NOT ELEGANT ENOUGH...
EXCUSE ME...

旭寿司
てんぷら
神田
旭寿司

ARAKAWA-SAN, THERE'S STILL A PLACE YOU HAVEN'T BEEN TO, RIGHT?
IT'S JUST A BIT FAR, BUT WE CAN DRIVE THERE...

SO, THE LAST HOPE, EH?
ANYTHING WILL DO, JUST FEED ME ALREADY!

MAYBE I SHOULD MAKE A HIRAME FOR EVERYONE. ALL THE SAME IS FINE.
WHAT WILL IT BE?


IT SEEMS THAT WAY, HUH?
LOOKS LIKE THE OTHER TABLE HAS SOME REGULARS, HUH?

14

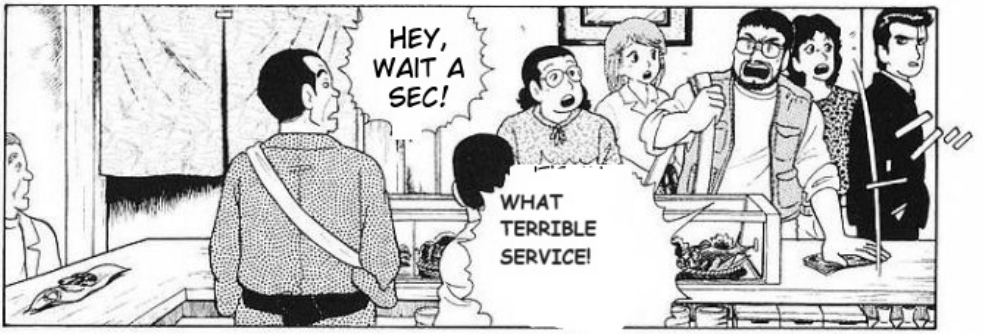
WE HAVE TO DECLINE! WE SELL SUSHI HERE, NOT PUT ON A SIDESHOW, OKAY?
AH...I SEE, GOT IT...

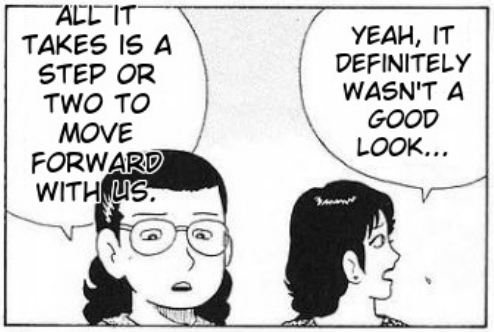
UM...CAN I TAKE A PHOTO OF YOU MAKING SUSHI?

IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE BEING GIVEN THE COLD SHOULDER JUST BECAUSE WE'RE NEW CUSTOMERS.
THEY'RE QUITE UNFRIENDLY, AREN'T THEY?
HEY,
15
OH...IS THAT YOUNG LAD BRINGING IT OVER?

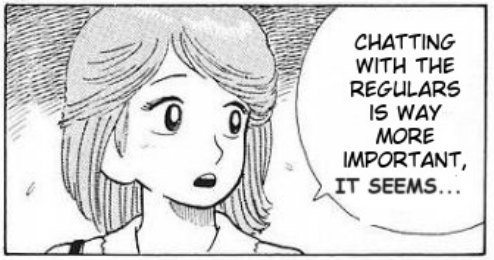
WHAT?! AGAIN?!

LET'S GO!!!
WE'RE LEAVING!!!


HEY, WAIT A SEC!
WHAT TERRIBLE SERVICE!


ALL IT TAKES IS A STEP OR TWO TO MOVE FORWARD WITH US.
YEAH, IT DEFINITELY WASN'T A GOOD LOOK...

16


CHATTING WITH THE REGULARS IS WAY MORE IMPORTANT, IT SEEMS...

I DON'T NEED TO SEE YOU MAKING SUSHI! YOU CLEARLY DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS!
MAKES NO SENSE TO HAVE THE UNDERLINGS SERVE SUSHI WITHOUT EVEN PRESENTING IT THEMSELVES TO THE CUSTOMERS.

THE ESSENCE OF SUSHI IS WHEN THE CHEF, WITH HEART AND SOUL, OFFERS IT TO YOU, AND ONLY THEN DOES THE SUSHI TRULY COME TO LIFE.
TO SERVE IT WITHOUT THAT PERSONAL TOUCH IS AKIN TO CREATING A LIFELESS STATUE, RENDERING THE ACT OF SITTING AT THE COUNTER MEANINGLESS.
SUSHI IS MEANT TO BE EATEN WITH BARE HANDS STRAIGHT FROM THE CHEF'S HANDS INTO YOUR MOUTH, NO UTENSILS REQUIRED.
THE MAGIC OF SUSHI LIES IN THE INTIMATE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CREATOR AND THE CONSUMER, A COMMUNION THROUGH THE ART OF BARE-HANDED PREPARATION AND ENJOYMENT.

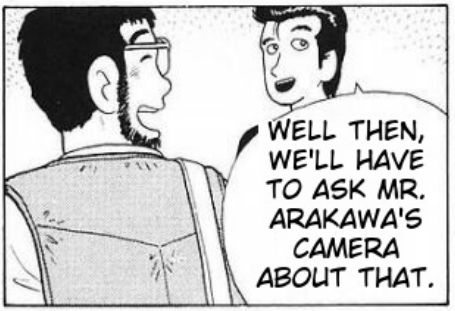
HUH? HEY, WHERE'S THE FIRST PAGE? THIS IS A MISBOUND BOOK!
YOU CAN'T MISS THIS TOP-NOTCH PLACE...
HUH? OH, YOU'RE RIGHT, WHAT A SURPRISE!

OH DEAR, DO YOU KNOW ANYWHERE ELSE TO GO, MR. YAMAOKA?

OH, I'M SO HUNGRY... PLEASE DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

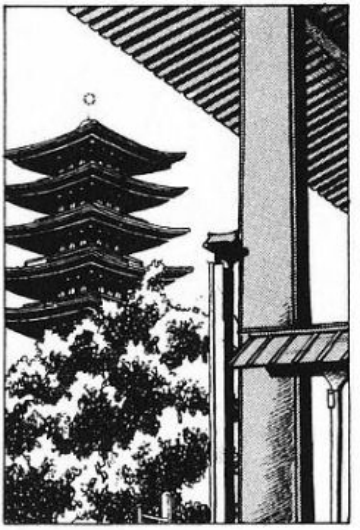
'MIYAKO SUSHI'? NEVER HEARD OF IT, IT'S NOT IN ANY GUIDEBOOK.
東京
HOW STRANGE... HAVE YOU BEEN TO 'MIYAKO' IN ASAKUSA?

17


WELL THEN, WE'LL HAVE TO ASK MR. ARAKAWA'S CAMERA ABOUT THAT.

I DON'T CARE WHAT IT IS, BUT YOU HAVE TO LET ME TRY IT NEXT TIME!
WELL, LET'S GO CHECK OUT THAT SHOP THEN!

みやこ寿司
みやこ寿司
みやこ寿司



WELL, WELL, IF IT ISN'T MR. YAMAOKA, LONG TIME NO SEE!

18

WE'RE GONNA TREAT MR. YAMAOKA, WHO ONLY DROPS BY OCCASIONALLY, JUST AS SPECIAL AS OUR REGULARS, NO FAVORITISM HERE!
HAHA, WHETHER YOU'RE A FIRST-TIMER OR A REGULAR, EVERYONE'S A VIP HERE, BABY!

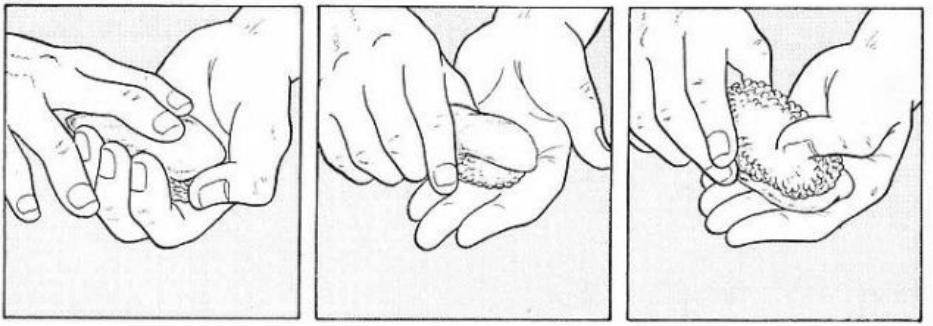
SO, IF I BECOME A REGULAR BY SWINGING BY EVERY DAY, WILL I GET THAT SPECIAL TREATMENT TOO?

FOODIE HEAVEN!

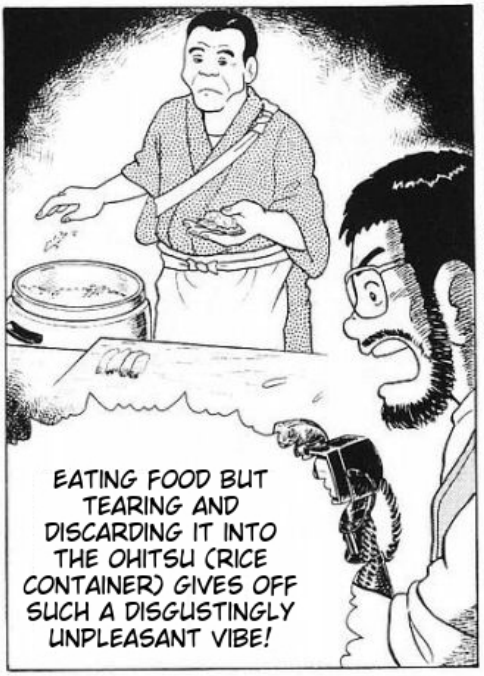
HEY HEY, WHAT'S ALL THE FUSS ABOUT?
NO WAY! COMPARED TO EVERYONE ELSE BEFORE, THERE'S JUST THIS AIR OF ELEGANCE!
ABSOLUTELY STUNNING! IT'S MY FIRST TIME SEEING SOMEONE HOLD IT SO BEAUTIFULLY!

ALRIGHT, BUT SERIOUSLY, WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL?
EXCUSE ME, BOSS... COULD YOU SHOW ME ONE MORE TIME?

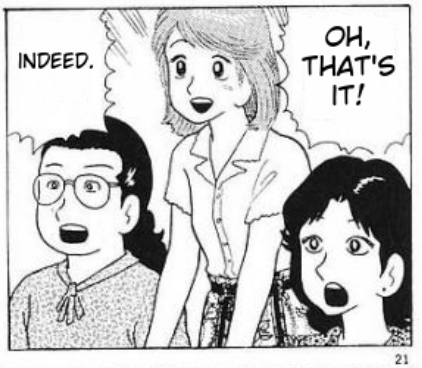
20



THE MASTER HERE DOESN'T TEAR THE RICE!
OH, WAIT! I SEE NOW!


EATING FOOD BUT TEARING AND DISCARDING IT INTO THE OHITSU (RICE CONTAINER) GIVES OFF SUCH A DISGUSTINGLY UNPLEASANT VIBE!

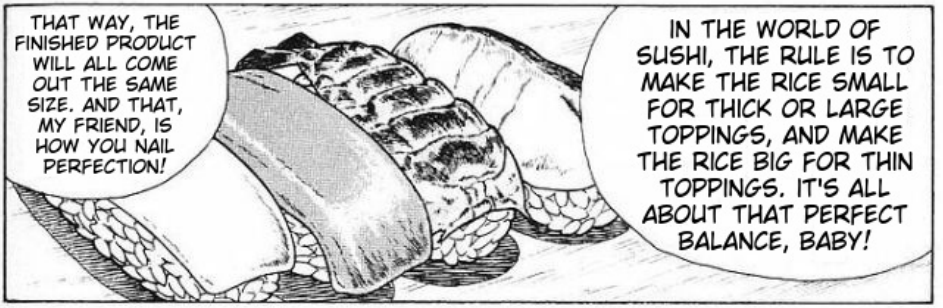
THAT'S RIGHT! EVERYONE ELSE PUTS THE TOPPING ON THE SUSHI RICE BEFORE TEARING IT AND DISCARDING IT!

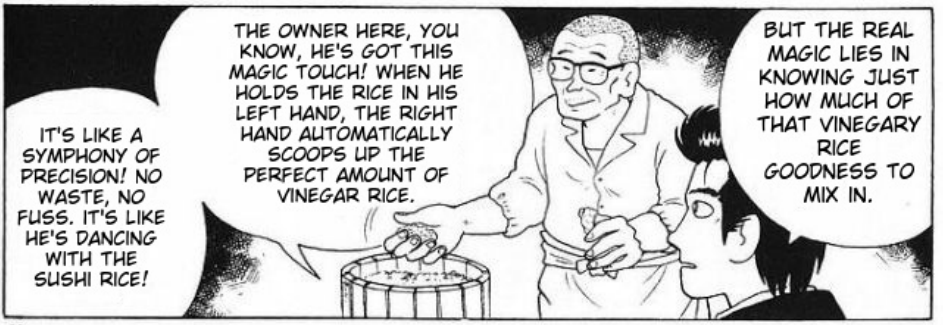

INDEED.
OH, THAT'S IT!

21

MASTER, SHOW US HOW IT'S DONE.
OH, SURE.

HAHAHA... THAT'S BECAUSE HE DOESN'T HAVE A PROPER SENSE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SIZE OF THE TOPPING AND THE AMOUNT OF SUSHI RICE.

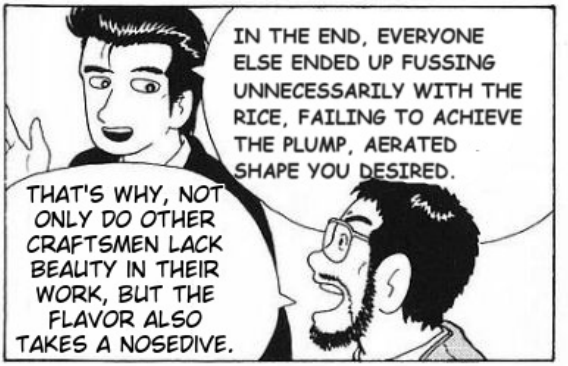

THAT WAY, THE FINISHED PRODUCT WILL ALL COME OUT THE SAME SIZE. AND THAT, MY FRIEND, IS HOW YOU NAIL PERFECTION!
IN THE WORD OF SUSHI, THE RULE IS TO MAKE THE RICE SMALL FOR THICK OR LARGE TOPPINGS, AND MAKE THE RICE BIG FOR THIN TOPPINGS. IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT PERFECT BALANCE, BABY!


IT'S LIKE A SYMPHONY OF PRECISION! NO WASTE, NO FUSS. IT'S LIKE HE'S DANCING WITH THE SUSHI RICE!
THE OWNER HERE, YOU KNOW, HE'S GOT THIS MAGIC TOUCH! WHEN HE HOLDS THE RICE IN HIS LEFT HAND, THE RIGHT HAND AUTOMATICALLY SCOOPS UP THE PERFECT AMOUNT OF VINEGAR RICE.
BUT THE REAL MAGIC LIES IN KNOWING JUST HOW MUCH OF THAT VINEGARY RICE GOODNESS TO MIX IN.

22

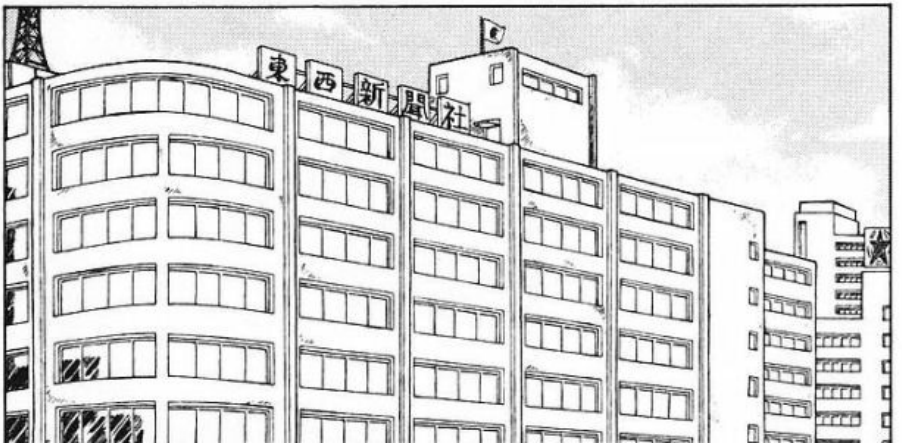
WOW, ARAKAWA-SAN, YOU SAW THROUGH THAT WITH YOUR LENS! THAT'S AMAZING!

IT'S ONLY WITH CARE AND EXPERIENCE THAT A TRUE MASTER CAN TELL THE CORRECT AMOUNT WITHOUT DISCARDING THE RICE!
I SEE. SO HE KNOWS EXACTLY HOW MUCH OF THE VINEGAR RICE TO TAKE!


IN THE END, EVERYONE ELSE ENDED UP FUSSING UNNECESSARILY WITH THE RICE, FAILING TO ACHIEVE THE PLUMP, AERATED SHAPE YOU DESIRED.
THAT'S WHY, NOT ONLY DO OTHER CRAFTSMEN LACK BEAUTY IN THEIR WORK, BUT THE FLAVOR ALSO TAKES A NOSEDIVE.

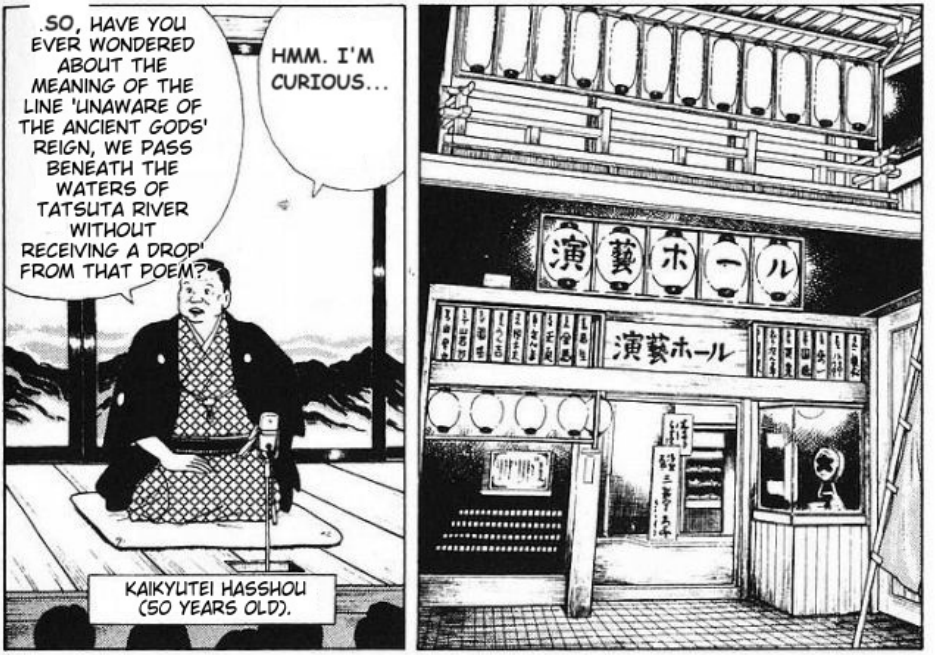
IF I HADN'T MET THE OWNER HERE, I WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN THE SECRET OF SUSHI'S BEAUTY!

NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU PRAISE ME, THE BILL WON'T GET ANY CHEAPER.
HEY, HEY,

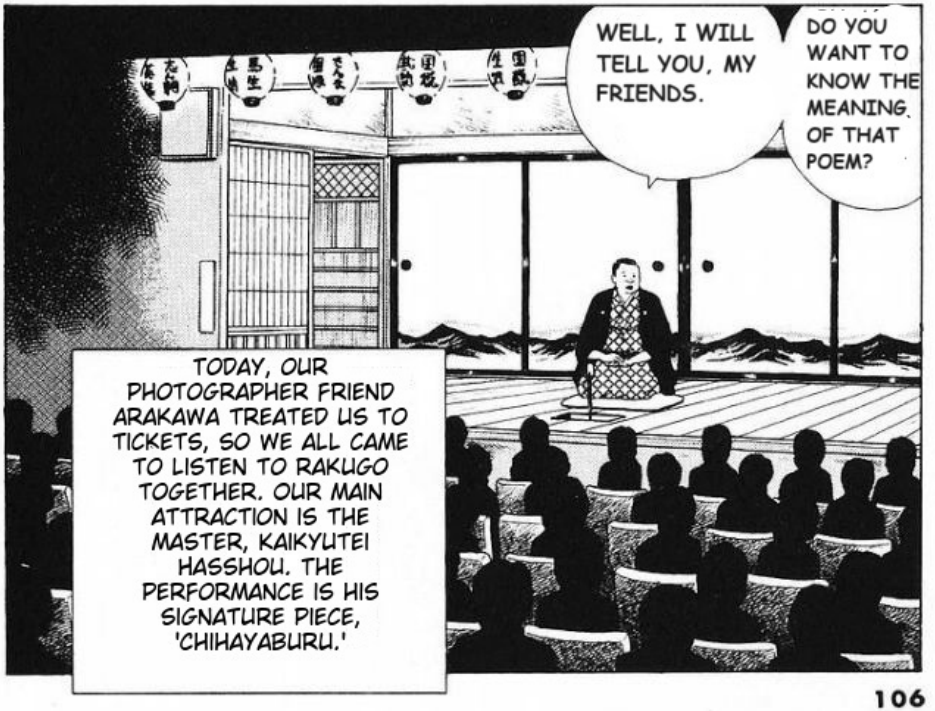

東西新聞社

A CAPABLE CAREER WOMAN AND A LAZY EMPLOYEE MAKE QUITE THE CONTRAST, DON'T THEY?
OH, IT'S A PICTURE OF ME.
WELL, THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
IT SEEMS SPRING HAS COME FOR TABATA-SAN TOO.
THIS IS MY RECENT MASTERPIECE. SORRY YAMAOKA-SAN, YOU'RE JUST A SUPPORTING ROLE THIS TIME. PLEASE ACCEPT IT.
24
I'LL SEND IT TO YOUR HOME LATER. PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR ADDRESS.
IT'S NOT READY!
WHY ARE YOU HIDING IT? LET ME SEE...
HUH?
HEY, CAN I SEE YOUR PHOTO?

第5話
大豆とにがり


SO, HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED ABOUT THE MEANING OF THE LINE 'UNAWARE OF THE ANCIENT GODS' REIGN, WE PASS BENEATH THE WATERS OF TATSUTA RIVER WITHOUT RECEIVING A DROP' FROM THAT POEM?
HMM. I'M CURIOUS...
KAIKYUTEI HASSHOU (50 YEARS OLD).
演芸ホール
演芸ホール

2


WELL, I WILL TELL YOU, MY FRIENDS.
DO YOU WANT TO KNOW THE MEANING OF THAT POEM?
TODAY, OUR PHOTOGRAPHER FRIEND ARAKAWA TREATED US TO TICKETS, SO WE ALL CAME TO LISTEN TO RAKUGO TOGETHER. OUR MAIN ATTRACTION IS THE MASTER, KAIKYUTEI HASSHOU. THE PERFORMANCE IS HIS SIGNATURE PIECE, 'CHIHAYABURU.'

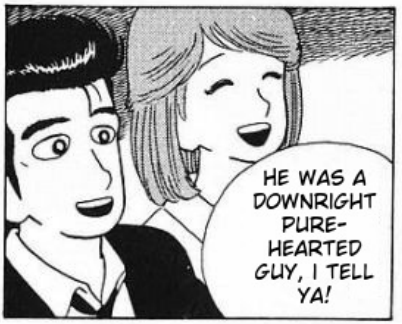
HEHEHE.
CHUCKLE.
LISTEN UP, TATSUTAGAWA WAS A SUMO WRESTLER TO RECKON WITH, MIND YOU.
OH REALLY! SO HE WAS A SUMO WRESTLER OF SOME RENOWN.

SO, FEELING DOWN IN THE DUMPS, HE TRIED HIS LUCK WITH HER LITTLE SISTER, ALSO AN OIRAN, KAMISHIRO, ONLY TO GET THE COLD SHOULDER AGAIN.
BUT ALAS, BEING A GEISHA, CHIHAYA SAID SHE COULD NOT FANCY A SUMO WRESTLER, AND TURNED HIM DOWN FLAT.
AND SO, FEELING DEJECTED, TATSUTAGAWA QUIT SUMO, RETURNED HOME, AND BECAME A TOFU VENDOR.

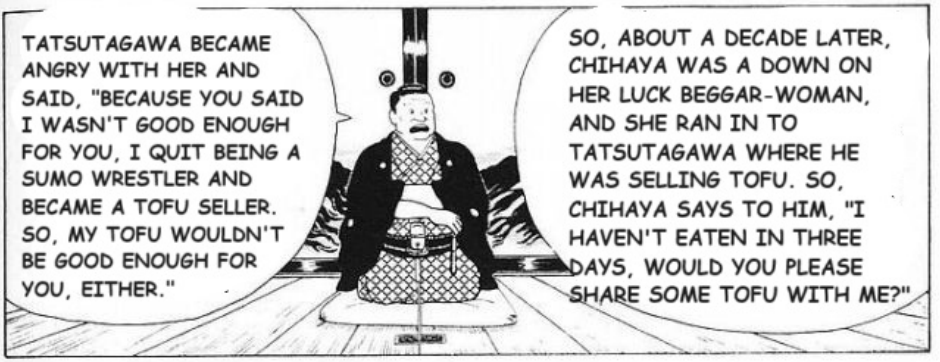
THE NAME OF THAT OIRAN WAS CHIHAYA.
OLD TATSUTAGAWA FELL HEAD OVER HEELS FOR THE OIRAN OF YOSHIWARA, YOU SEE.

OH MY, CHIHAYA WAS THE NAME OF THE OIRAN!

3


HE WAS A DOWNRIGHT PURE-HEARTED GUY, I TELL YA!

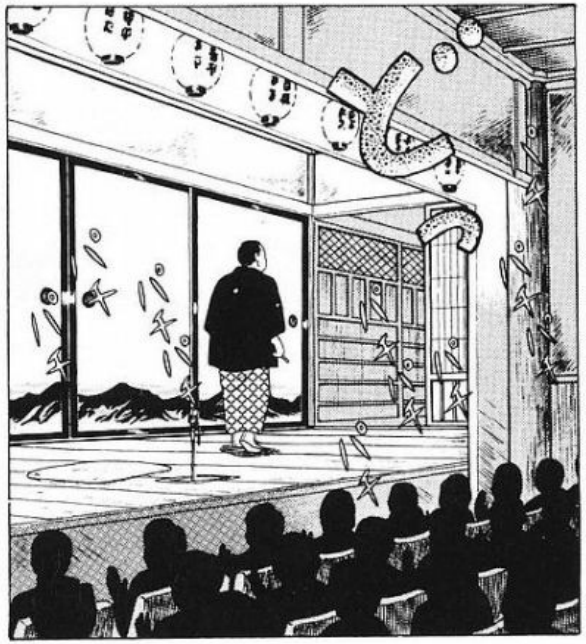
WELL, WELL, GIVING UP SUMO AND RUNNING BACK TO HIS HOMELAND JUST 'CAUSE HE GOT REJECTED BY A WOMAN? WHAT A SLOPPY MAN, AIN'T HE?


TATSUTAGAWA BECAME ANGRY WITH HER AND SAID, "BECAUSE YOU SAID I WASN'T GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, I QUIT BEING A SUMO WRESTLER AND BECAME A TOFU SELLER. SO, MY TOFU WOULDN'T BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU, EITHER."
SO, ABOUT A DECADE LATER, CHIHAYA WAS A DOWN ON HER LUCK BEGGAR-WOMAN, AND SHE RAN IN TO TATSUTAGAWA WHERE HE WAS SELLING TOFU. SO, CHIHAYA SAYS TO HIM, "I HAVEN'T EATEN IN THREE DAYS, WOULD YOU PLEASE SHARE SOME TOFU WITH ME?"

CHIHAYA REJECTED TATSUTAGAWA, SO EVEN THE HEAVENS TURNED A BLIND EYE WHEN HE WOULD NOT GIVE HER EVEN A DROP OF TOFU.
NOW YOU GET THE MEANING DON'T YOU?

THEN CHIHAYA, HEARTBROKEN, FLUNG HERSELF INTO A NEARBY WELL AND MET HER END.
WOW, HOW TRAGIC.

4

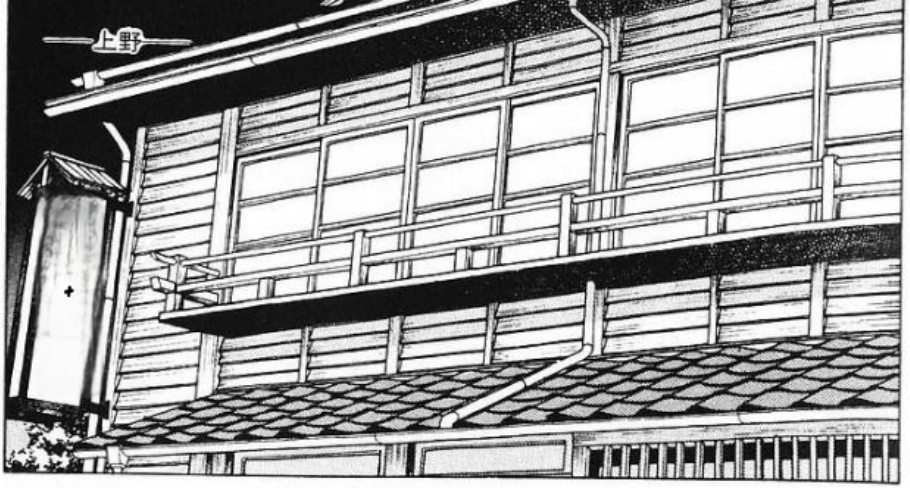


AND SO, CHIHAYA ENDED HER LIFE IN THE WATER.

DELICIOUS!

I'M ACTUALLY QUITE CLOSE WITH MASTER HASSHOU, AND WE'RE PLANNING TO HAVE DRINKS TOGETHER TONIGHT.
WOULD YOU ALL CARE TO JOIN ME FOR A MOMENT?
WOW, THAT SOUNDS LIKE A BLAST.
I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO HAVE A CHAT WITH A RAKUGO STORYTELLER.
HOW INTRIGUING.
雀
勇
一林
蘇
狗

NOWADAYS, THE KANTO RAKUGO WORLD IS FILLED WITH LOW-MINDED TV COMEDIANS,
WELL, I'M A BIG FAN OF YOURS, HASSHO-SENSEI.
THE ONLY DECENT RAKUGO STORYTELLERS ARE SHINTO, KOSANJI, AND HASSHO-SENSEI.
ARAKAWA-SAN CAPTURED ME QUITE A BIT WHILE I WAS PERFORMING ON STAGE.
THE LEVEL OF CULTURE IN THE OLD DAYS MUST HAVE BEEN SO HIGH, RIGHT?
IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT 'CHIHAYABURU' IS A PREFIX FOR GODS, CURRENT RAKUGO WON'T BE FUNNY AT ALL.
BUT WITHOUT EDUCATION, YOU WON'T APPRECIATE THE CHARM OF RAKUGO.
6
ALRIGHT, IT'S JUST AROUND THE CORNER, LET'S HAVE A NIGHT OF TOFU DISHES.
HEY, WHY SUDDENLY THROW A TEST ON CLASSICAL LITERATURE AT ME OUT OF THE BLUE!
YAMAOKA-SAN, TRY TELLING ME WHOSE SONG GOES, 'CHIHAYABURU KAMIYO MO KIKAZU TATSUTAGAWA...'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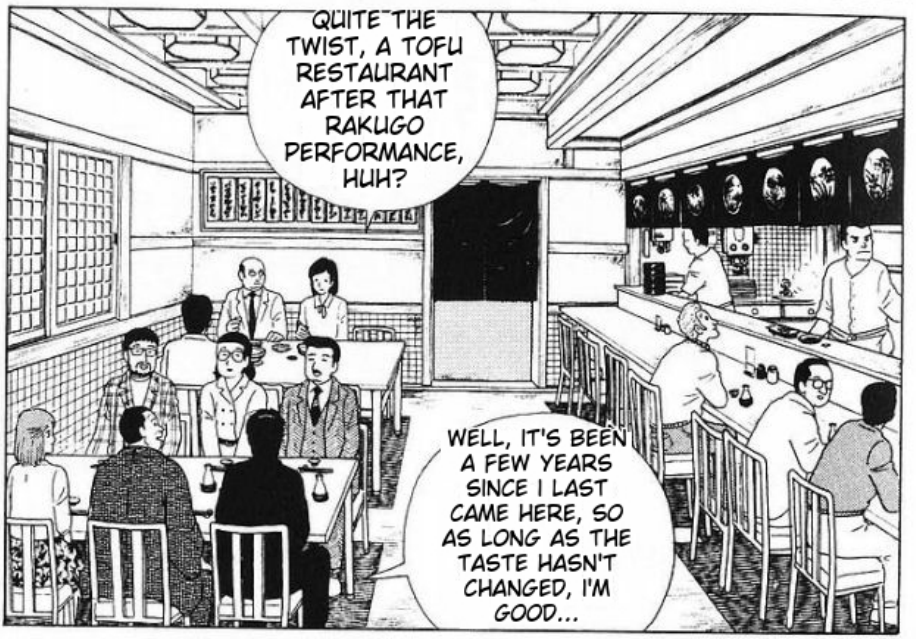
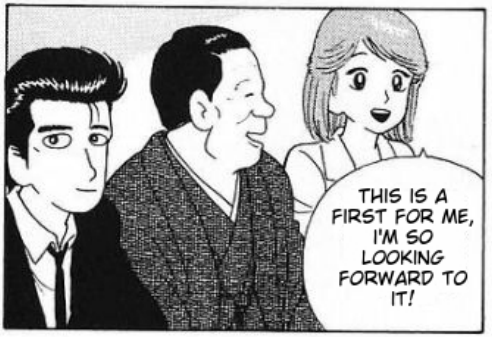
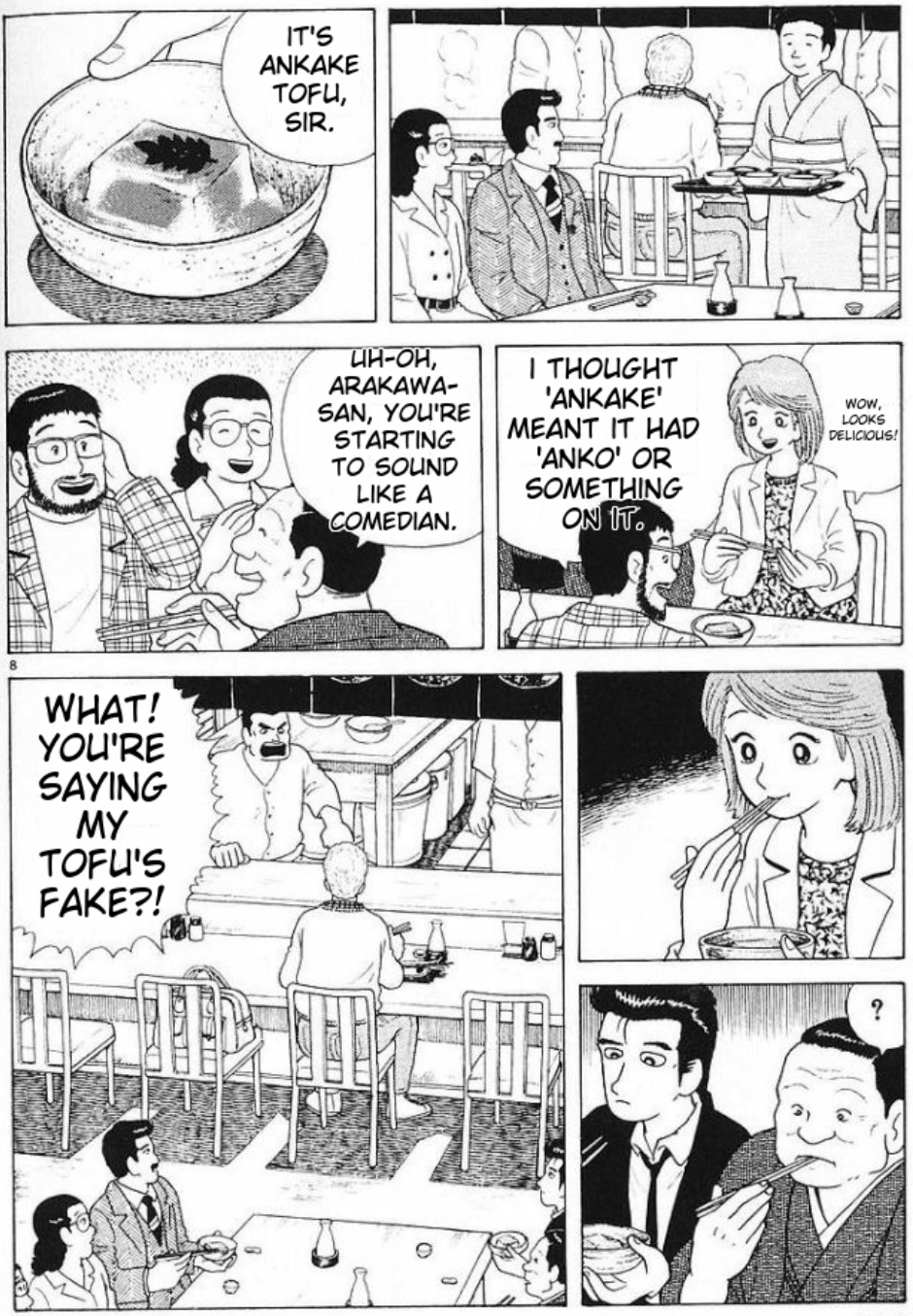

QUITE THE TWIST, A TOFU RESTAURANT AFTER THAT RAKUGO PERFORMANCE, HUH?
WELL, IT'S BEEN A FEW YEARS SINCE I LAST CAME HERE, SO AS LONG AS THE TASTE HASN'T CHANGED, I'M GOOD...

7


THIS IS A FIRST FOR ME, I'M SO LOOKING FORWARD TO IT!

IS THIS A TOFU PARADISE OR WHAT, WITH ALL THESE SOYBEAN DISHES?


IT'S ANKAKE TOFU, SIR.
UH-OH, ARAKAWA-SAN, YOU'RE STARTING TO SOUND LIKE A COMEDIAN.
I THOUGHT 'ANKAKE' MEANT IT HAD 'ANKO' OR SOMETHING ON IT.
WOW, LOOKS DELICIOUS!
8
WHAT! YOU'RE SAYING MY TOFU'S FAKE?!
?

QUIT MESSING AROUND, THINKING A FOREIGNER LIKE YOU CAN DECIPHER THE TASTE OF TOFU!! ACCUSING ME OF WEIRD STUFF, MUST BE A NEW FORM OF DINE-AND-DASH SCHEME, HUH!!
EXACTLY!! THIS AIN'T TOFU!

YOU WANNA GO, BUDDY!! STEP OUTSIDE!!
EASY NOW, GENTLEMEN, HOLD YOUR HORSES.

EATING AND THEN RUNNING OFF WITHOUT PAYING? IT'S JUST LIKE STEALING, MATE!!
DINE AND DASH?! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

I'M GETTING MAD NOW!!
I'M NO THIEF, I TELL YA!!

I'M A CUSTOMER, AND AS A CUSTOMER, I'M TRYING TO MEDIATE YOUR BRAWL, BUT YOU JUST CAN'T SEEM TO GRASP THAT.
HOLD UP, YOU'RE MESSING WITH THE WRONG PERSON HERE.
GET LOST, PAL! WE DON'T NEED YOU TO MEDIATE!

WHY, YOU?!

THIS FOREIGNER DARED TO CRITICIZE OUR TOFU, CALLING IT FAKE! CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?
LET'S HEAR IT OUT! WHAT'S THE CAUSE OF THIS WHOLE RUCKUS?

SO, HAVE YOU EVER TASTED REAL TOFU THEN? HUH?
SPILL IT!
I'LL TELL YOU!
WHERE DID THIS ALL GO DOWN?!

BECAUSE REAL TOFU DOESN'T TASTE LIKE THIS, DOESN'T SMELL LIKE THIS!

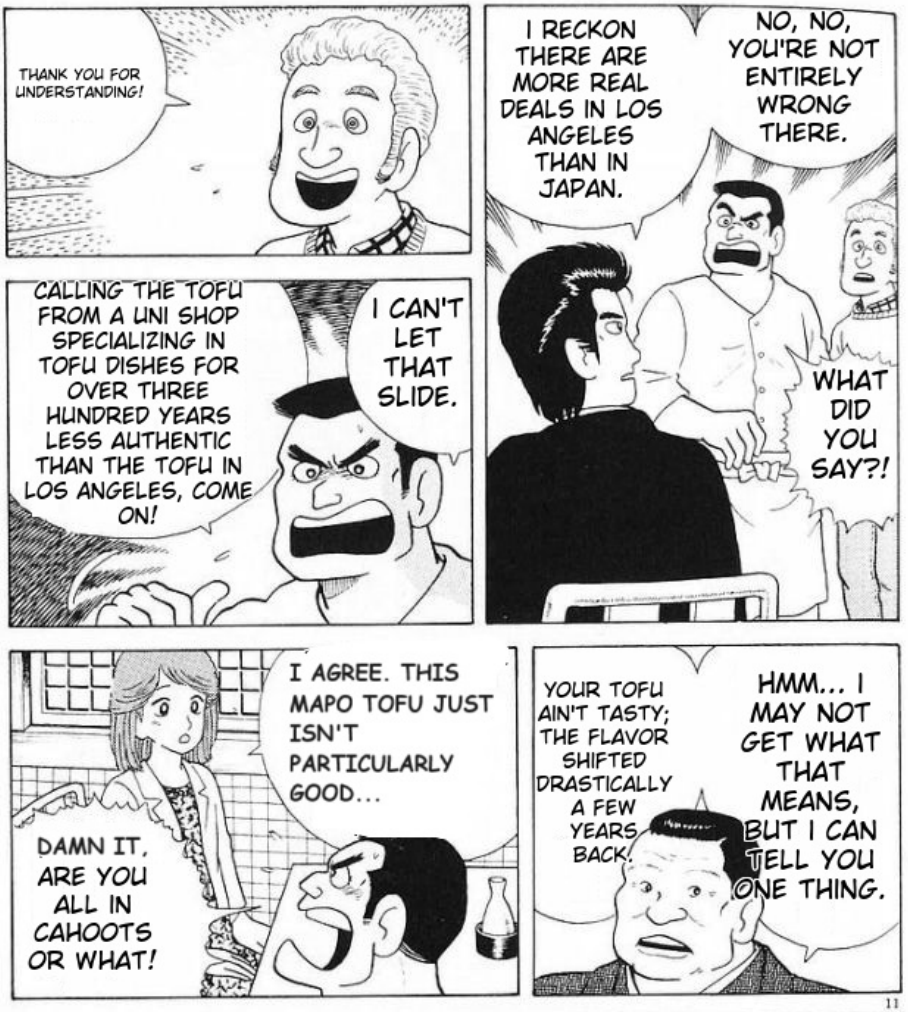
JAPANESE FOLKS CAN TELL REAL FROM FAKE, BUT DON'T EXPECT A FOREIGNER TO UNDERSTAND!
ENOUGH WITH THE NONSENSE! TOFU IS A JAPANESE DELICACY!

10

I THOUGHT MAYBE HE HAD TRIED TOFU FROM SOME FANCY JAPANESE JOINT, BUT TURNS OUT IT'S LOS ANGELES TOFU!
HAHA... RIDICULOUS! LET'S JUST END THIS CONVERSATION HERE.

IN LOS ANGELES!

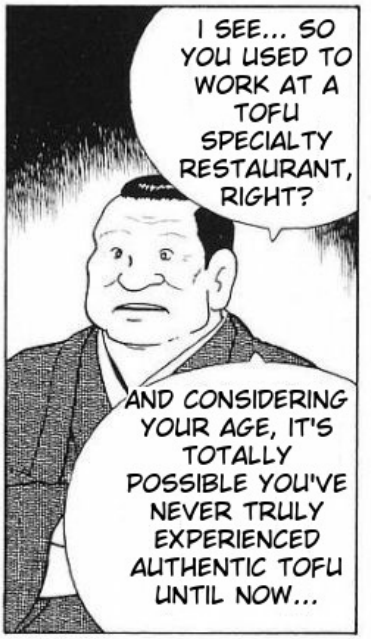
DELICIOUS!

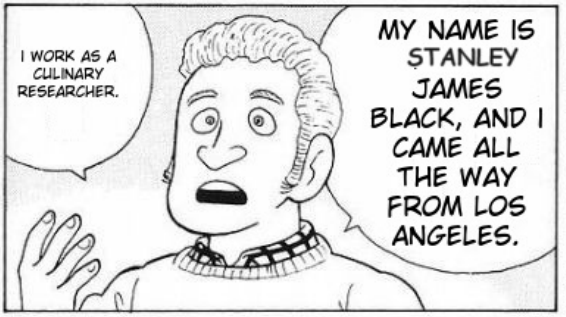

THANK YOU FOR UNDERSTANDING!
I RECKON THERE ARE MORE REAL DEALS IN LOS ANGELES THAN IN JAPAN.
NO, NO, YOU'RE NOT ENTIRELY WRONG THERE.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
CALLING THE TOFU FROM A UNI SHOP SPECIALIZING IN TOFU DISHES FOR OVER THREE HUNDRED YEARS LESS AUTHENTIC THAN THE TOFU IN LOS ANGELES, COME ON!
I CAN'T LET THAT SLIDE.
I AGREE. THIS MAPO TOFU JUST ISN'T PARTICULARLY GOOD...
DAMN IT, ARE YOU ALL IN CAHOOTS OR WHAT!
YOUR TOFU AIN'T TASTY; THE FLAVOR SHIFTED DRASTICALLY A FEW YEARS BACK.
HMM... I MAY NOT GET WHAT THAT MEANS, BUT I CAN TELL YOU ONE THING.

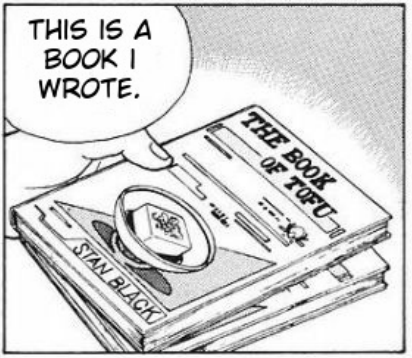
SO, I'M NOT SAYING YOUR COOKING SKILLS ARE LAME, I'M SAYING THE TOFU ITSELF IS NO GOOD.
WELL, DON'T GET TOO UPSET NOW. I MEAN, IT'S NOT LIKE THIS PLACE MAKES THEIR OWN TOFU, YOU KNOW?
WE GET OUR TOFU FROM A TOFU SHOP AROUND THE CORNER.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD THIS PLACE?
IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS, MAN! I WAS HEADHUNTED FROM A HIGH-CLASS KYOTO RESTAURANT TO WORK HERE.
THE PREVIOUS HEAD CHEF LEFT TO START HIS OWN PLACE, AND I WAS HANDED THE TORCH AFTER HIM.

BY THE WAY, WHO ARE YOU?
NO WAY! ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU'VE NEVER TASTED REAL TOFU BEFORE?
DAMN IT, THIS IS INFURIATING!


I SEE... SO YOU USED TO WORK AT A TOFU SPECIALTY RESTAURANT, RIGHT?
AND CONSIDERING YOUR AGE, IT'S TOTALLY POSSIBLE YOU'VE NEVER TRULY EXPERIENCED AUTHENTIC TOFU UNTIL NOW...


I WORK AS A CULINARY RESEARCHER.
MY NAME IS STANLEY JAMES BLACK, AND I CAME ALL THE WAY FROM LOS ANGELES.


THIS IS A BOOK I WROTE.
THE BOOK OF TOFU
STAN BLACK

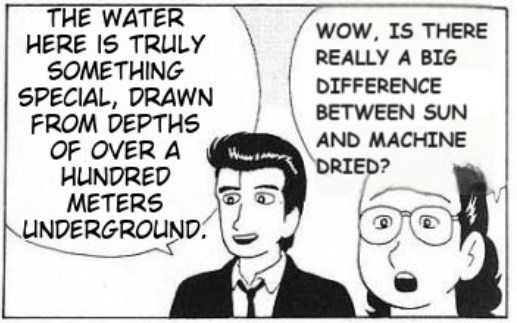
WHAT, A CULINARY RESEARCHER!

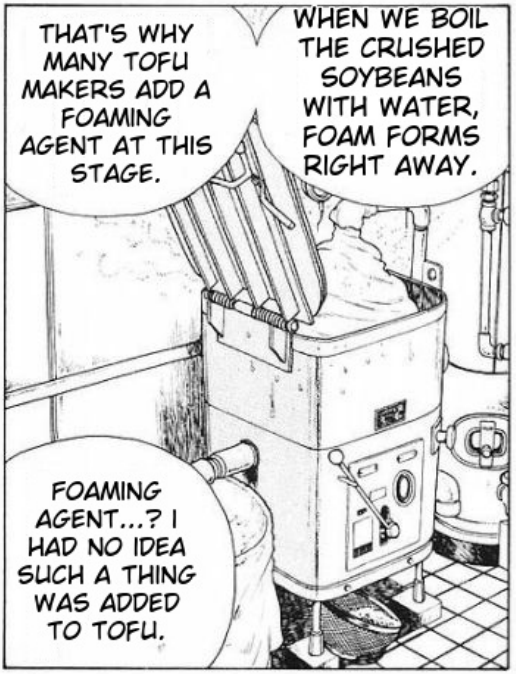
WELL, COLOR ME SURPRISED!
HUH? A BOOK ABOUT TOFU, YOU SAY?
ISN'T 'THE BOOK OF TOFU' JUST THE MOST TOFU-TASTIC BOOK EVER!!
AMERICANS HAVE CAUGHT ON TO THE GREATNESS OF TOFU AS A NUTRITIOUS FOOD, AND NOW YOU CAN FIND IT EVEN IN SUPERMARKETS IN LOS ANGELES.
RIGHT NOW, TOFU IS ALL THE RAGE IN AMERICA! BESIDES ME, THERE ARE TONS OF PEOPLE WRITING BOOKS ABOUT TOFU. IT'S LIKE A TOFU FRENZY OUT THERE!
I LEARNED FROM THE JAPANESE AND NOW I'M MAKING IT MYSELF.
I TOO HAVE BEEN CAPTIVATED BY THE CHARM OF TOFU.
IT'S JUST LIKE JAPAN HERE, ISN'T IT?
WOW, EVEN TO THE SUPERMARKET?!
13
WOW... A TOFU SALAD SOUNDS PRETTY GOOD, HUH?
THE BOOK OF TOFU
TOFU STEAK AND TOFU ICE CREAM, YOU SAY? THAT'S TOFU-RRIFIC!
WE NEVER SAW THIS COMING, DID WE? THIS IS SOME NEXT-LEVEL STUFF WE'VE GOT GOING ON HERE.
THERE'S A BOOK HERE THAT EXPLAINS HOW TO MAKE TOFU WITH DETAILED ILLUSTRATIONS. IT ALSO HAS A MENU OF TOFU DISHES.

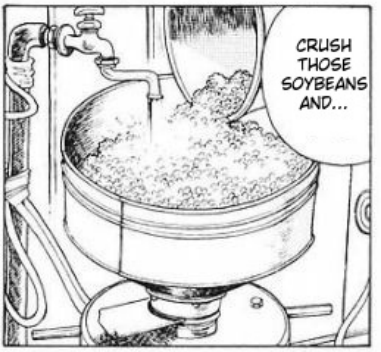
自然食品
みやこ豆汁
みやこ豆腐
HI THERE.
カラ
OH, YAMAOKA-SAN, PERFECT TIMING! WE'RE JUST ABOUT TO START.
I'M ISOSAKI FROM MIYAKO TOFU SHOP.
HELLO, SORRY TO INTRUDE.
SORRY TO SWARM YOU WITH A BIG CROWD.
I'M STAN... BLACK. NICE TO MEET YOU.
EVEN A FOREIGNER!
ブスウ
I'M WATCHING TOFU-MAKING FOR THE FIRST TIME.
WELL, WELL, IT'S MY FIRST TIME SEEING THE ENTIRE PROCESS FROM START TO FINISH TOO.

16

DELICIOUS!







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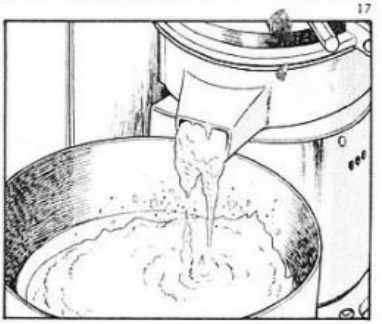
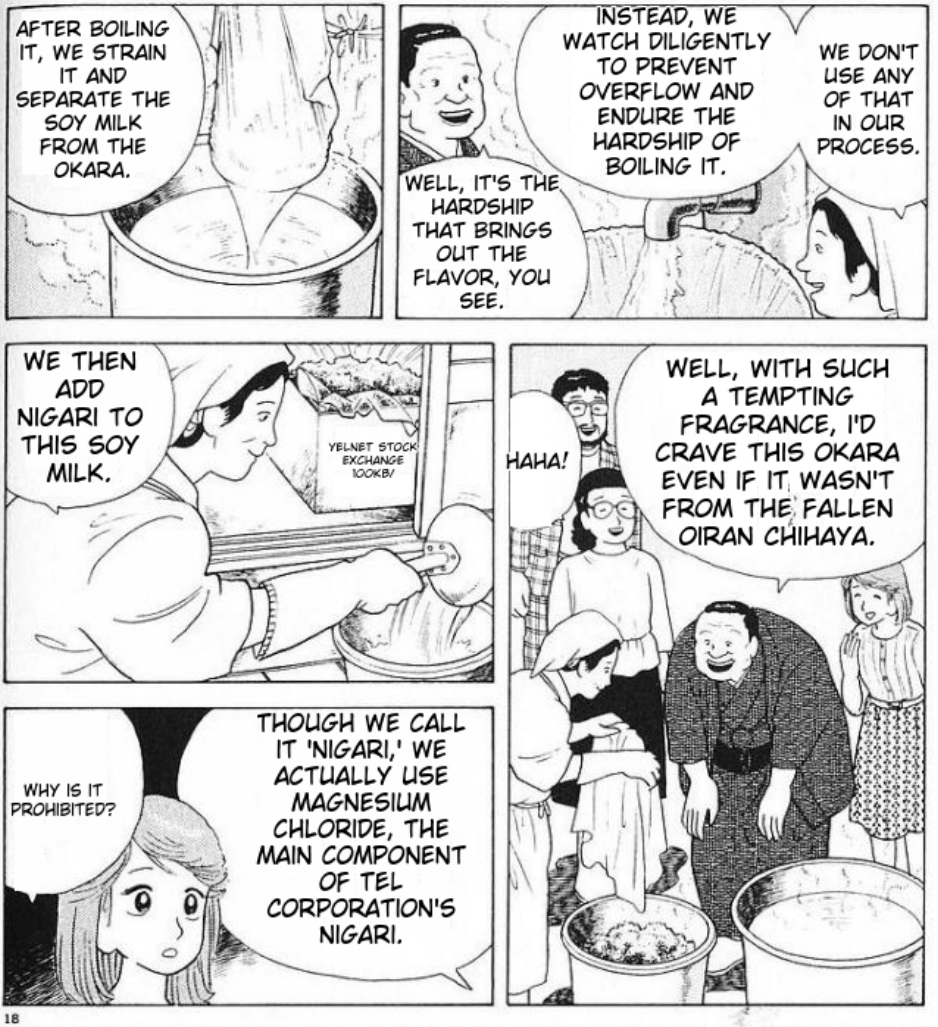
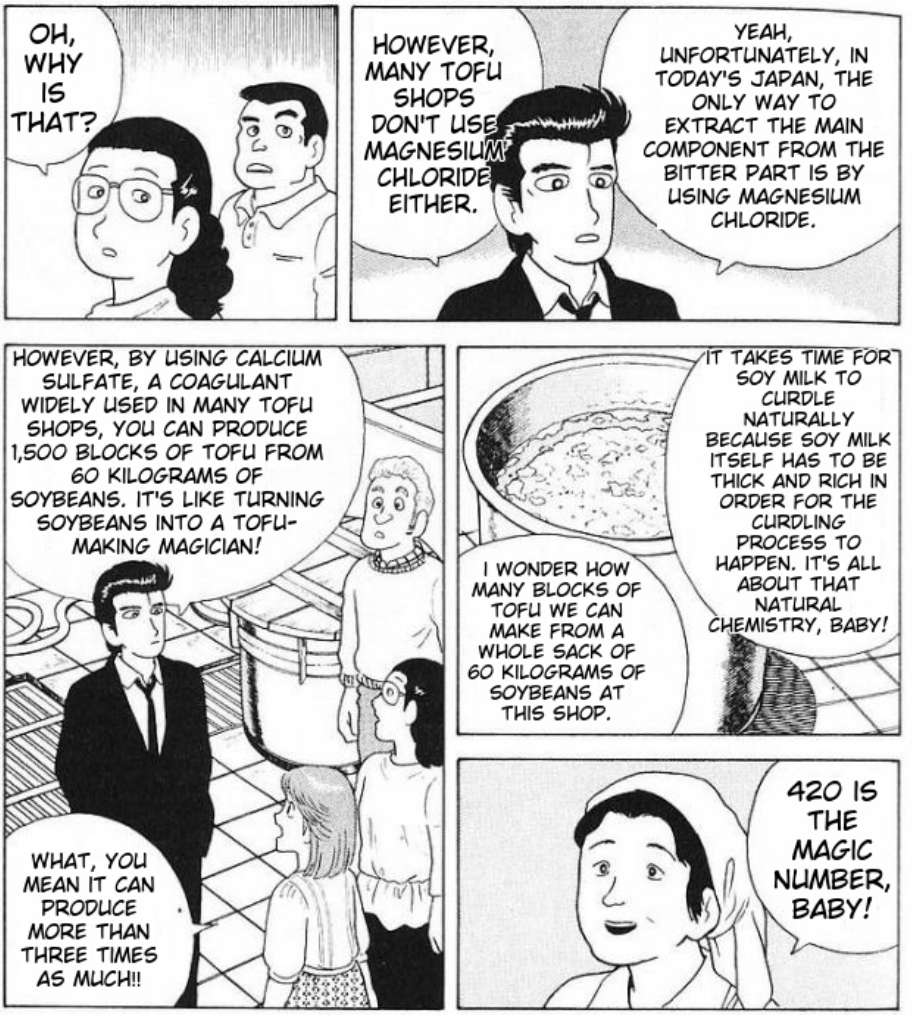
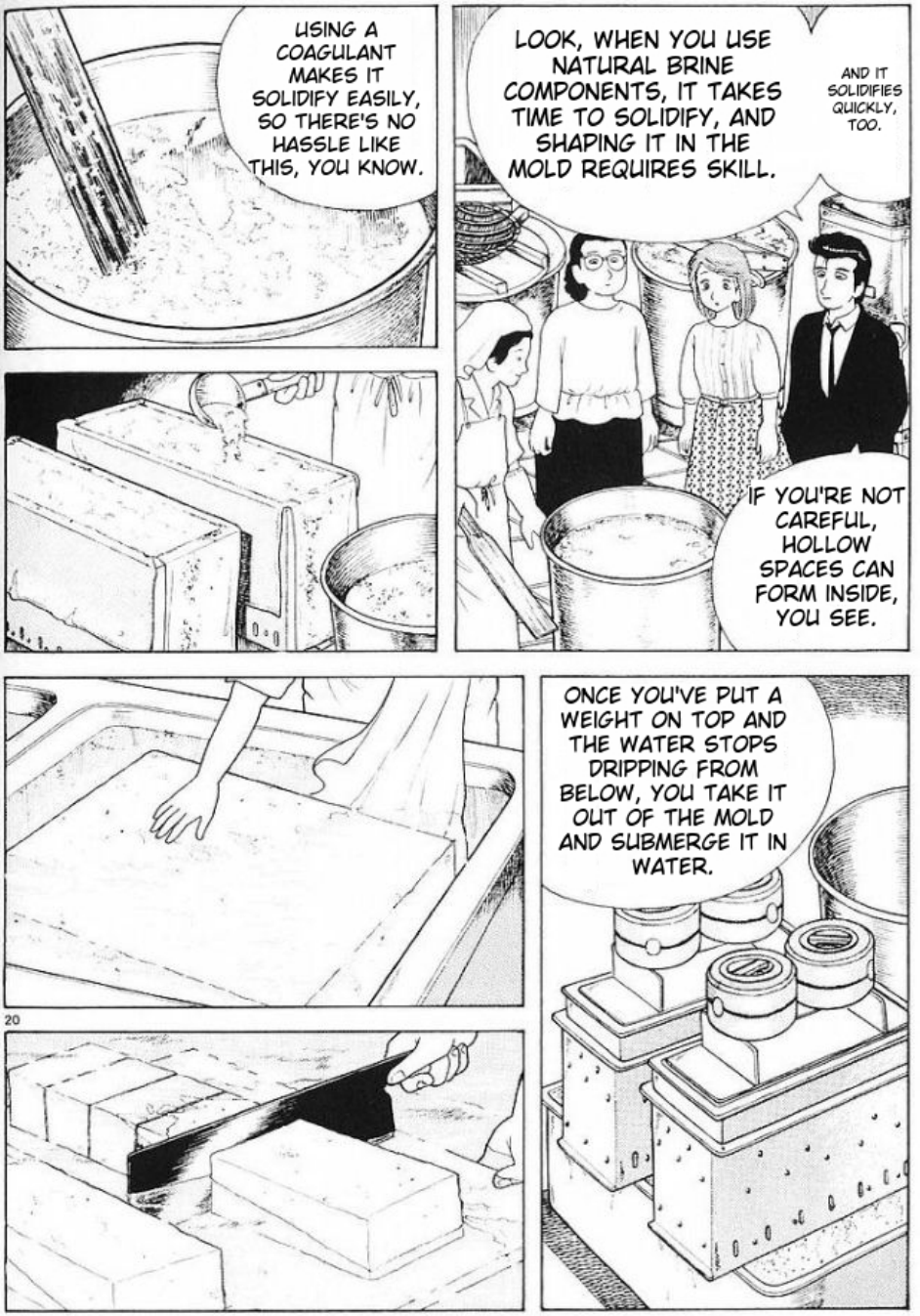
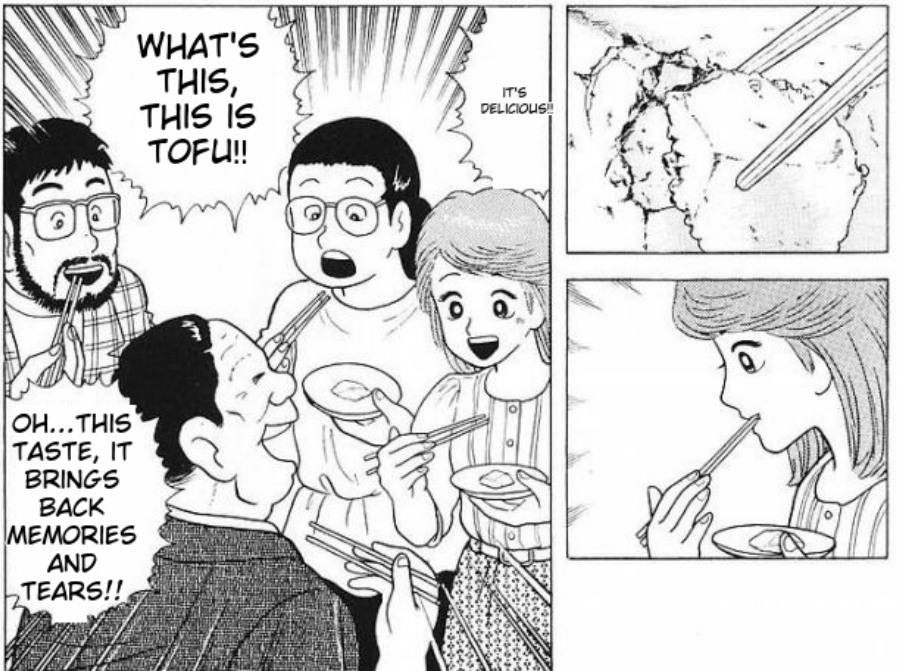



AFTER BOILING IT, WE STRAIN IT AND SEPARATE THE SOY MILK FROM THE OKARA.
WELL, IT'S THE HARDSHIP THAT BRINGS OUT THE FLAVOR, YOU SEE.
INSTEAD, WE WATCH DILIGENTLY TO PREVENT OVERFLOW AND ENDURE THE HARDSHIP OF BOILING IT.
WE DON'T USE ANY OF THAT IN OUR PROCESS.
WE THEN ADD NIGARI TO THIS SOY MILK.
YELNET STOCK EXCHANGE 100KB/
HAHA!
WELL, WITH SUCH A TEMPTING FRAGRANCE, I'D CRAVE THIS OKARA EVEN IF IT WASN'T FROM THE FALLEN OIRAN CHIHAYA.
WHY IS IT PROHIBITED?
THOUGH WE CALL IT 'NIGARI,' WE ACTUALLY USE MAGNESIUM CHLORIDE, THE MAIN COMPONENT OF TEL CORPORATION'S NIGARI.
18
SO, TOFU CLAIMING TO USE NATURAL NIGARI MUST HAVE A CATCH, HUH?
WELL, THAT'S A SAD STORY.
BUT WITH THE SEVERE POLLUTION IN JAPAN'S SEAS NOWADAYS, USING NATURAL NIGARI AS IS COULD BE DANGEROUS.
NIGARI IS A BYPRODUCT WHEN MAKING SALT.

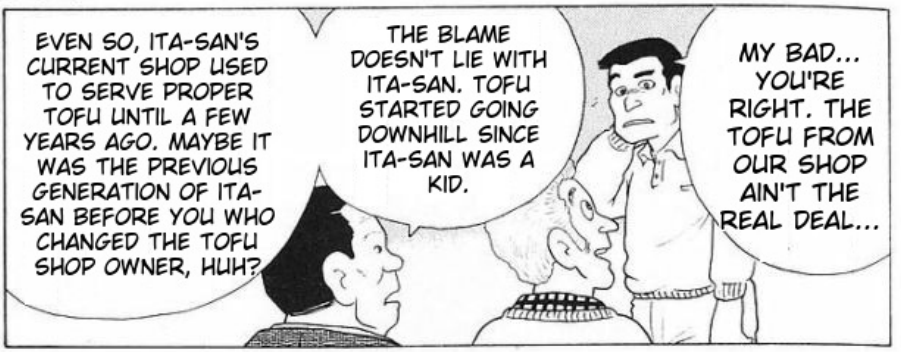

OH, WHY IS THAT?
HOWEVER, MANY TOFU SHOPS DON'T USE MAGNESIUM CHLORIDE EITHER.
YEAH, UNFORTUNATELY, IN TODAY'S JAPAN, THE ONLY WAY TO EXTRACT THE MAIN COMPONENT FROM THE BITTER PART IS BY USING MAGNESIUM CHLORIDE.
HOWEVER, BY USING CALCIUM SULFATE, A COAGULANT WIDELY USED IN MANY TOFU SHOPS, YOU CAN PRODUCE 1,500 BLOCKS OF TOFU FROM 60 KILOGRAMS OF SOYBEANS. IT'S LIKE TURNING SOYBEANS INTO A TOFU-MAKING MAGICIAN!
WHAT, YOU MEAN IT CAN PRODUCE MORE THAN THREE TIMES AS MUCH!!
I WONDER HOW MANY BLOCKS OF TOFU WE CAN MAKE FROM A WHOLE SACK OF 60 KILOGRAMS OF SOYBEANS AT THIS SHOP.
IT TAKES TIME FOR SOY MILK TO CURDLE NATURALLY BECAUSE SOY MILK ITSELF HAS TO BE THICK AND RICH IN ORDER FOR THE CURDLING PROCESS TO HAPPEN. IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT NATURAL CHEMISTRY, BABY!
420 IS THE MAGIC NUMBER, BABY!
19
IT'S NO WONDER THAT TOFU TURNS OUT BLAND AND WATERY WHEN YOU USE POOR QUALITY INGREDIENTS WITH NO FLAVOR OR AROMA, RIGHT?
IF YOU USE THE SAME AMOUNT OF SOYBEANS, YOU CAN'T MAKE THAT MUCH, YOU KNOW?
WOW! THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN 420 AND 3,000 IS LIKE NIGHT AND DAY!
YOU KNOW, IF WE USE THIS MAGIC INGREDIENT CALLED GLUCONO DELTA-LACTONE, WE CAN CHURN OUT A WHOPPING THREE THOUSAND BATCHES OF THAT DESSERT!


USING A COAGULANT MAKES IT SOLIDIFY EASILY, SO THERE'S NO HASSLE LIKE THIS, YOU KNOW.
LOOK, WHEN YOU USE NATURAL BRINE COMPONENTS, IT TAKES TIME TO SOLIDIFY, AND SHAPING IT IN THE MOLD REQUIRES SKILL.
AND IT SOLIDIFIES QUICKLY, TOO.
IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, HOLLOW SPACES CAN FORM INSIDE, YOU SEE.
ONCE YOU'VE PUT A WEIGHT ON TOP AND THE WATER STOPS DRIPPING FROM BELOW, YOU TAKE IT OUT OF THE MOLD AND SUBMERGE IT IN WATER.
20

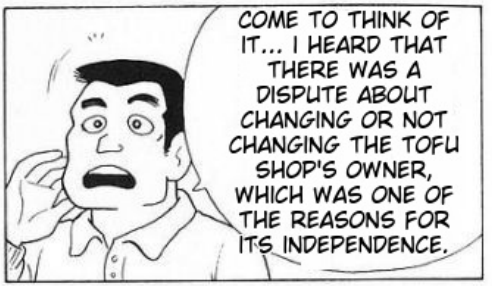
おいしい DELICIOUS!

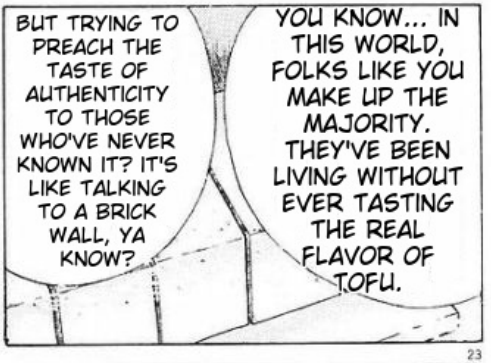


THEN WHAT IN THE WORLD HAVE I BEEN THINKING OF AS TOFU ALL THIS TIME?!
IF THEY CALL THIS TOFU...
THIS IS TOFU!! THIS IS THE REAL DEAL TOFU!!
WE DON'T USE LOW-QUALITY SOYBEANS HERE. WE WON'T TOUCH THOSE ROUND SOYBEANS THAT HAVE GONE BAD. INSTEAD, WE USE SOY FLOUR MADE FROM SOYBEANS SQUEEZED DRY OF ALL THEIR ESSENCE, JUST A HINT OF AROMA LEFT BEHIND.
WELL, FOR STARTERS, THE INGREDIENTS ARE DIFFERENT. THEY DON'T USE HONEST INGREDIENTS LIKE THEY USED TO IN PLACES LIKE THIS ESTABLISHMENT.
WELL, THAT CAN'T BE CALLED REAL TOFU.
THEY SOLIDIFY IT WITH COAGULANT INSTEAD OF USING NIGARI.
MOST OF THEM USE A DEFOAMER.
AND THAT'S WHY THESE DAYS, YOU WON'T SEE PILES OF OKARA OUTSIDE TOFU SHOPS LIKE IN THE OLD DAYS AS YOU PASS BY...
HAHA...
22
TO THINK I WAS SERVING SUCH THINGS TO CUSTOMERS...
I'M SO EMBARRASSED.
ABSOLUTELY OUTRAGEOUS... THAT'S NOTHING BUT A CHEAP IMITATION.
SHALL WE COMPARE THE TASTE OF THE TOFU THEY BROUGHT WITH THIS TOFU?

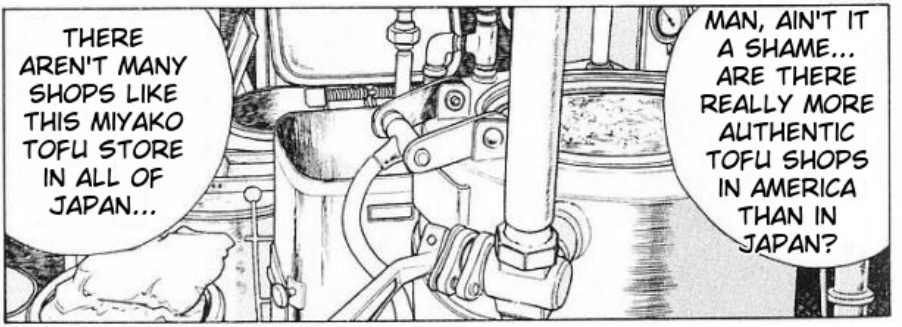

EVEN SO, ITA-SAN'S CURRENT SHOP USED TO SERVE PROPER TOFU UNTIL A FEW YEARS AGO. MAYBE IT WAS THE PREVIOUS GENERATION OF ITA-SAN BEFORE YOU WHO CHANGED THE TOFU SHOP OWNER, HUH?
THE BLAME DOESN'T LIE WITH ITA-SAN. TOFU STARTED GOING DOWNHILL SINCE ITA-SAN WAS A KID.
MY BAD... YOU'RE RIGHT. THE TOFU FROM OUR SHOP AIN'T THE REAL DEAL...

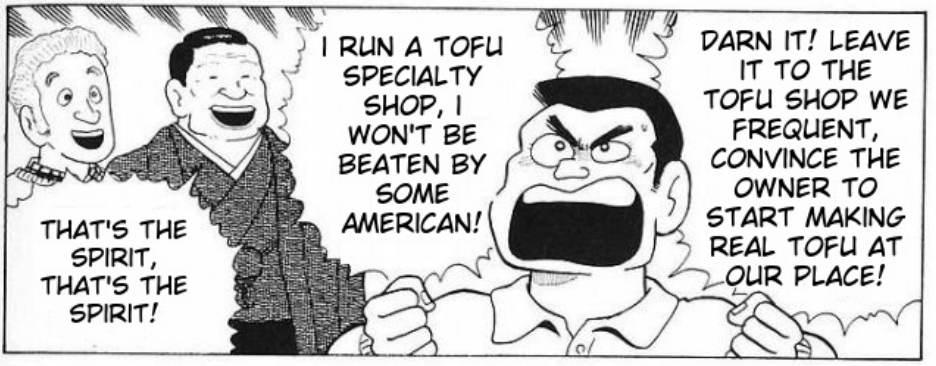
WELL, AMERICA IS CONSIDERED A DEVELOPING COUNTRY WHEN IT COMES TO TOFU.
BUT TO THINK MR. BLACK, A PERSON FROM AMERICA KNOWS THE TASTE OF REAL TOFU BETTER THAN US...
WE STICK TO MAKING IT THE RIGHT WAY, USING ONLY SOYBEANS AND NIGARI, JUST LIKE WE WERE TAUGHT.


COME TO THINK OF IT... I HEARD THAT THERE WAS A DISPUTE ABOUT CHANGING OR NOT CHANGING THE TOFU SHOP'S OWNER, WHICH WAS ONE OF THE REASONS FOR ITS INDEPENDENCE.


BUT TRYING TO PREACH THE TASTE OF AUTHENTICITY TO THOSE WHO'VE NEVER KNOWN IT? IT'S LIKE TALKING TO A BRICK WALL, YA KNOW?
YOU KNOW... IN THIS WORLD, FOLKS LIKE YOU MAKE UP THE MAJORITY. THEY'VE BEEN LIVING WITHOUT EVER TASTING THE REAL FLAVOR OF TOFU.

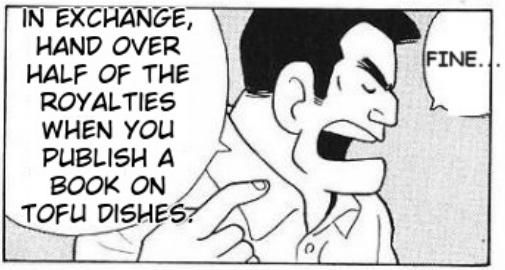
23


THERE AREN'T MANY SHOPS LIKE THIS MIYAKO TOFU STORE IN ALL OF JAPAN...
MAN, AIN'T IT A SHAME... ARE THERE REALLY MORE AUTHENTIC TOFU SHOPS IN AMERICA THAN IN JAPAN?


I RUN A TOFU SPECIALTY SHOP, I WON'T BE BEATEN BY SOME AMERICAN!
DARN IT! LEAVE IT TO THE TOFU SHOP WE FREQUENT, CONVINCE THE OWNER TO START MAKING REAL TOFU AT OUR PLACE!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, THAT'S THE SPIRIT!

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! YOU'RE AN AMERICAN, YOU KNOW NOTHING OF JAPAN'S WAYS!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?! AM I NOT A TRUE EDOITE AFTER ALL?

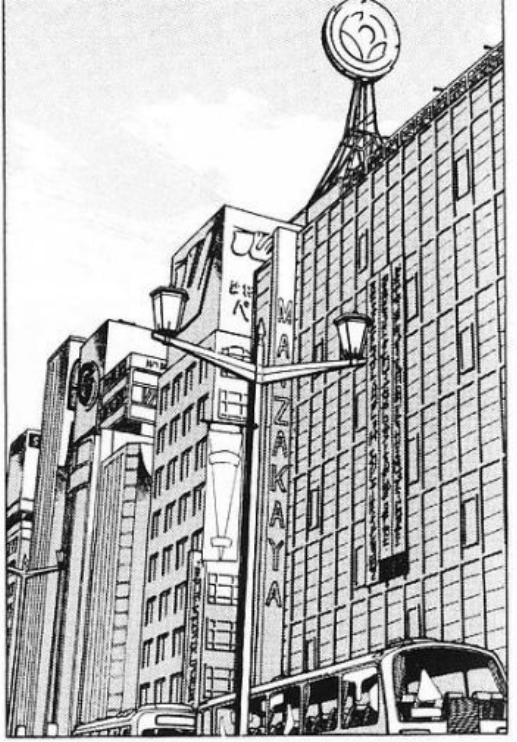
ITA-SAN, PLEASE TEACH ME ABOUT TOFU DISHES!

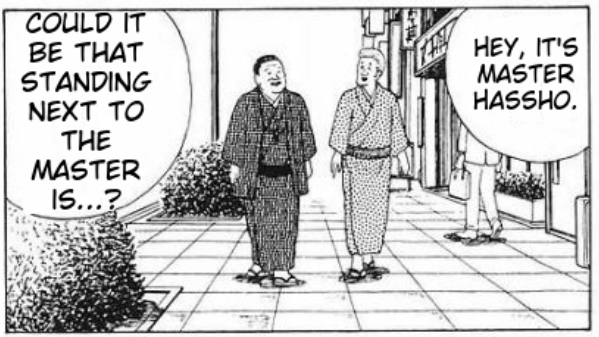

IN EXCHANGE, HAND OVER HALF OF THE ROYALTIES WHEN YOU PUBLISH A BOOK ON TOFU DISHES.
FINE...

24

...

DELICIOUS!





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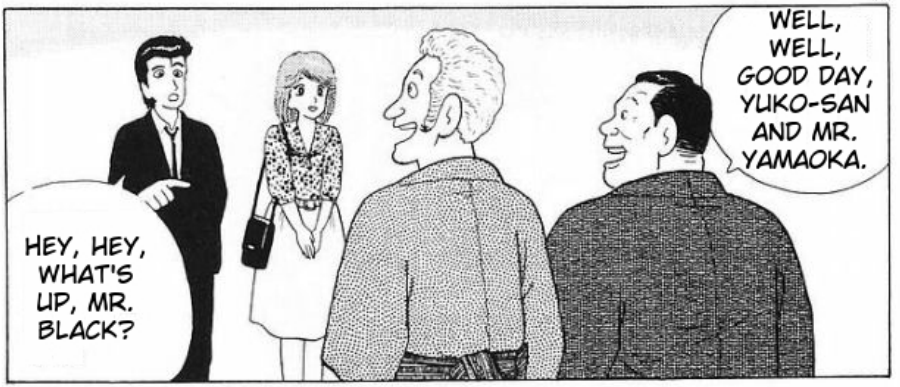
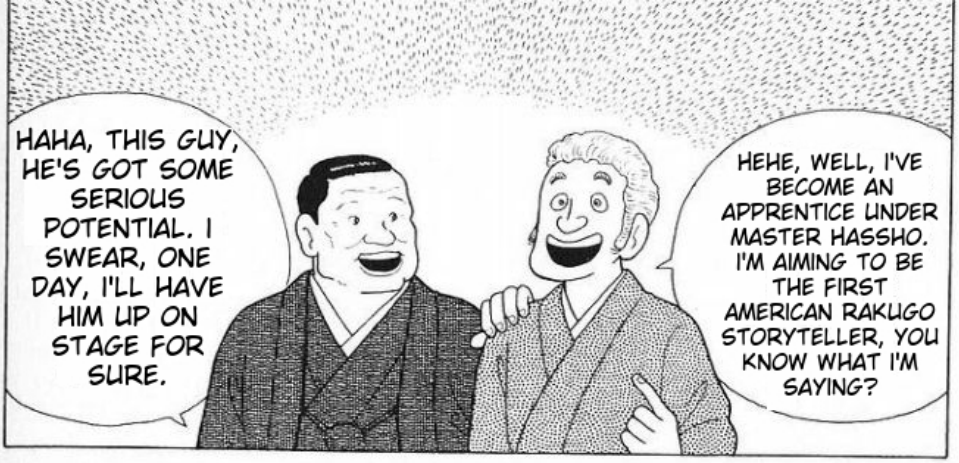
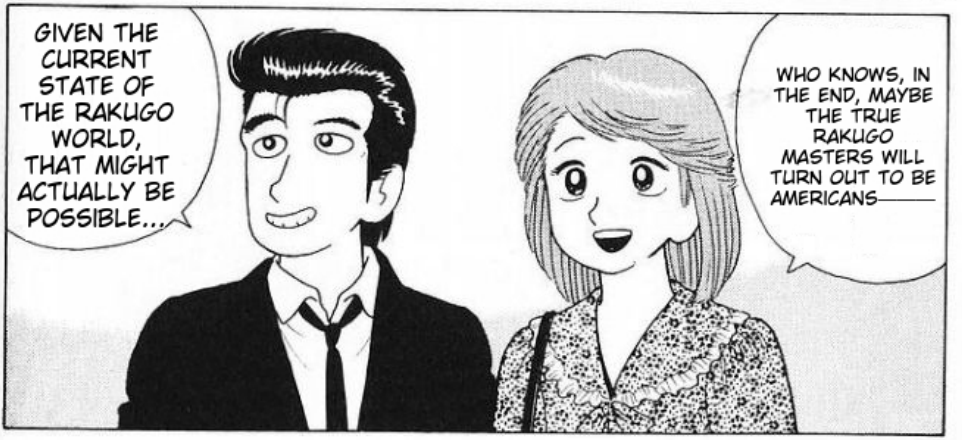



HAHA, THIS GUY, HE'S GOT SOME SERIOUS POTENTIAL. I SWEAR, ONE DAY, I'LL HAVE HIM UP ON STAGE FOR SURE.
HEHE, WELL, I'VE BECOME AN APPRENTICE UNDER MASTER HASSHO. I'M AIMING TO BE THE FIRST AMERICAN RAKUGO STORYTELLER, YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYING?

I AM KNOWN AS KAIRAKUTEI BLACK, PLEASE SHOW ME SOME LOVE!

26


GIVEN THE CURRENT STATE OF THE RAKUGO WORLD, THAT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE POSSIBLE...
WHO KNOWS, IN THE END, MAYBE THE TRUE RAKUGO MASTERS WILL TURN OUT TO BE AMERICANS——

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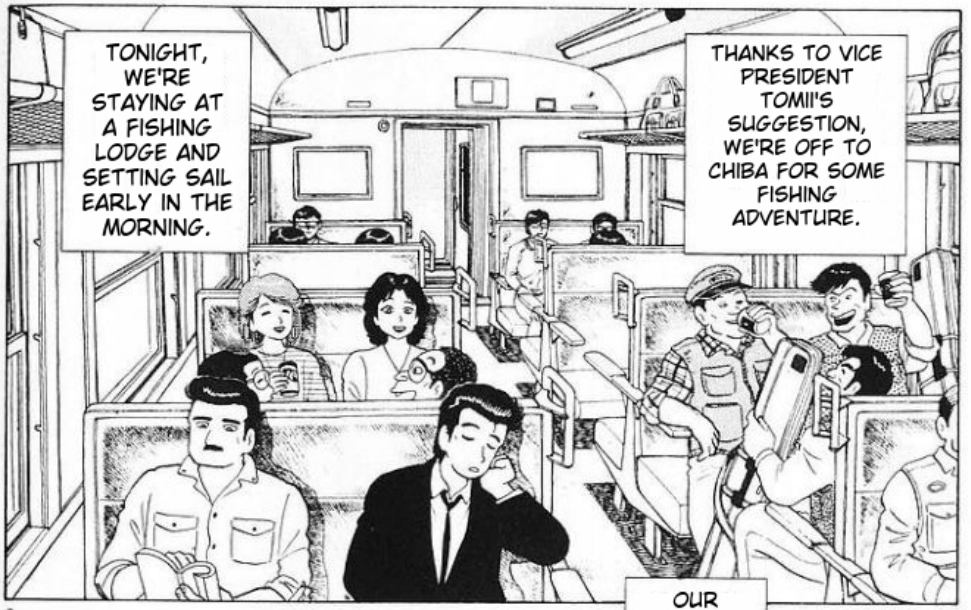
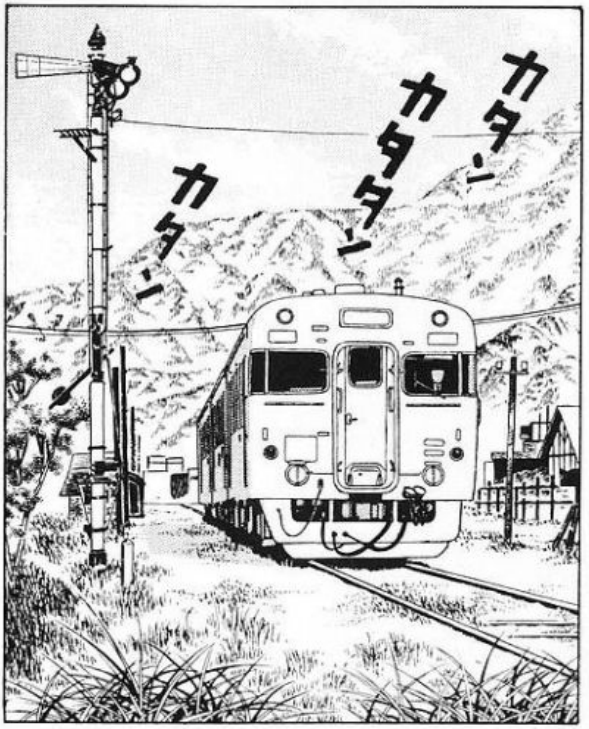

TONIGHT, WE'RE STAYING AT A FISHING LODGE AND SETTING SAIL EARLY IN THE MORNING.
THANKS TO VICE PRESIDENT TOMII'S SUGGESTION, WE'RE OFF TO CHIBA FOR SOME FISHING ADVENTURE.

2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OUR TARGET IS NONE OTHER THAN THE DARING SEA BREAM!
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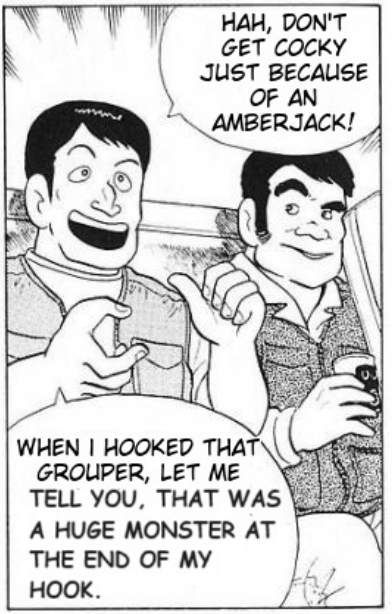
DELICIOUS!

THAT AMBERJACK WE CAUGHT THE OTHER DAY WAS AMAZING, THE PULL WAS SO STRONG I THOUGHT MY ARM WOULD BREAK!

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAUGHT A WHOLE BUNCH OF BAIT-STEALING GOATFISH IN HALF A DAY, YOU KNOW.
HMPH, BOASTING ABOUT THE SIZE OF YOUR CATCH STILL MAKES YOU A ROOKIE.


HAH, DON'T GET COCKY JUST BECAUSE OF AN AMBERJACK!
WHEN I HOOKED THAT GROUPER, LET ME TELL YOU, THAT WAS A HUGE MONSTER AT THE END OF MY HOOK.

ME? I CAUGHT A BARRACUDA OFF THE COAST OF HAWAII! THE THRILL OF IT HITTING THE TROLLING LINE WAS SOMETHING ELSE...
SUCH SMALL FRY, HUH?

3

BIG FISHING

ポリポリ
WELL, BRAG ALL YOU WANT, TOMORROW'S THE REAL DEAL.

OTOMUHARA.
WHICH WAY ARE YOU LADIES HEADED?
NOT AT A FISHING SPOT, WE'RE TAKING A BOAT OUT.
OH? I THINK THERE'S A FISHING SPOT FOR BEGINNERS AROUND THERE.
WE'RE GOING FISHING.
OTOMUHARA? WE'RE GOING THERE TOO, WHAT ARE YOU GOING FOR?
4
THEY SAY THEY'RE TAKING A BOAT OUT TO CATCH SEA BREAM!
YEAH, SEA BREAM!
GO FISHING
SCARY! BEGINNERS ARE SCARY!
BY BOAT? WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO CATCH?
WE'RE THINKING OF GOING FISHING FOR SEA BREAM.

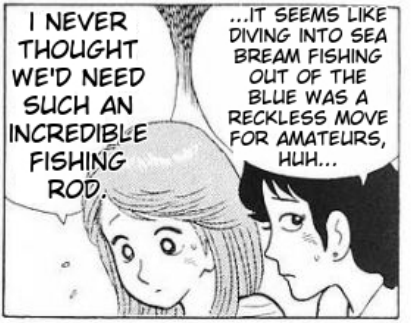
I'VE GOT SPARE UNDERWEAR, BUT I'M STICKING WITH THIS TOP.
HOW RUDE, ARE WE IN THE WRONG FOR GOING FISHING FOR TAI FISH?
OH BOY! IT'S LIKE TRYING TO CLIMB A MOUNTAIN IN HIGH HEELS!
YOU'RE NOT SERIOUSLY PLANNING TO BOARD THE BOAT IN THOSE CLOTHES, ARE YOU?
OH MY, LOOK AT YOU, MISSY! BUT WHERE ARE YOUR TOOLS? LIKE THE ROD AND THE GEAR...
WELL, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BORROW GEAR FROM THE FISHING LODGE.
WHO CARES ABOUT THE OUTFIT, RIGHT?

ALL SET.
COME ON, SHOW ME WHAT YOU GOT.
ESPECIALLY FOR THE TAI FISH IN OTOMUHARA IT'S ALL ABOUT THE GEAR.
TYPICAL TOOSHIRO, ALWAYS LIKE THIS. FISHING LODGE GEAR IS CHEAP, CATCH WITH THAT AND YOU WON'T NEED TO STRUGGLE.

カシャ
CHECK IT OUT, THIS FISHING ROD IS MADE OF CARBON FIBER, LIGHT AS A FEATHER, FLEXIBLE, THE ULTIMATE ROD, I TELL YA.
THE PRICE IS NO JOKE, IT COSTS MORE THAN YOUR WHOLE MONTH'S SALARY, LADIES.
HEY LADIES, IF YOU WANNA REEL IN SOME SNAPPER, YOU GOTTA INVEST A BIT OF CASH LIKE THIS.
GOING TO BUY GRILLED SNAPPER IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT STORY, YOU KNOW.
THIS ONE HERE IS MADE OF BAMBOO, CRAFTED BY THE MASTER ROD MAKER 'ROD ZEN'.
THIS AIN'T SOMETHING YOU CAN BUY WITH YOUR MONTHLY SALARY, NOT EVEN WITH A BONUS.
HAHAHA! GRILLED SNAPPER, ANYONE CAN CATCH WITH THAT, RIGHT?!

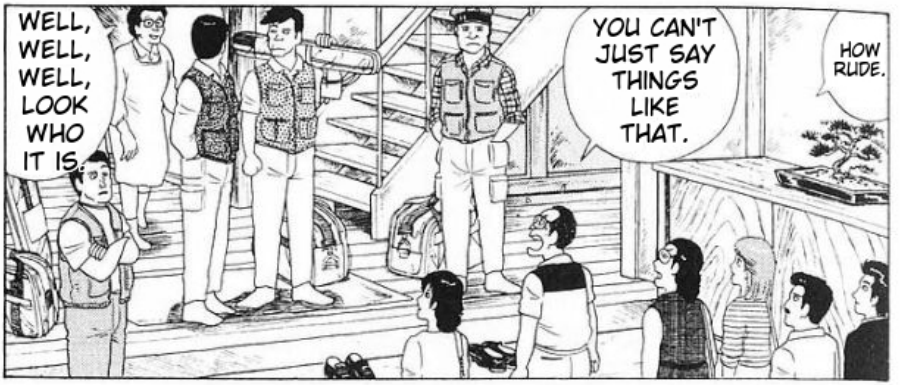
WOW-HA-HA-HA-HA!!
ANKO IS TOO SWEET AND GIRLY, HUH!!

I'VE LOST MY FIGHTING SPIRIT...
WHO CARES? WE CAN STILL SOAK IN THE VIBE, RIGHT?


I NEVER THOUGHT WE'D NEED SUCH AN INCREDIBLE FISHING ROD.
...IT SEEMS LIKE DIVING INTO SEA BREAM FISHING OUT OF THE BLUE WAS A RECKLESS MOVE FOR AMATEURS, HUH...

大富原駅

GOOD EVENING.
SAME FISHING BOAT, HUH.
OH, IT'S YOU GUYS...
JUST DON'T GET IN THE WAY OF OUR FISHING, OKAY?
MAN, CAN'T BELIEVE WE GOTTA SHARE A BOAT WITH TOTAL AMATEURS.
TOMORROW, WE'RE GONNA BE ON THE SAME BOAT AS THESE FOLKS?


WELL, WELL, WELL, LOOK WHO IT IS.
YOU CAN'T JUST SAY THINGS LIKE THAT.
HOW RUDE.

SORRY, FELLAS, I'LL BE TAKING ALL THE SEA BREAM FOR MYSELF AND SNAGGING THAT PRIZE MONEY.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S EACH PUT IN TEN THOUSAND YEN, WINNER TAKES ALL.
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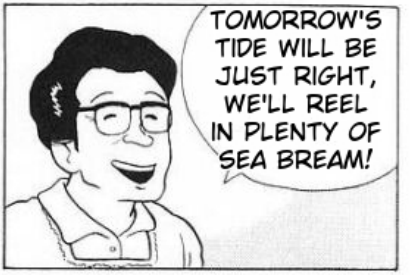
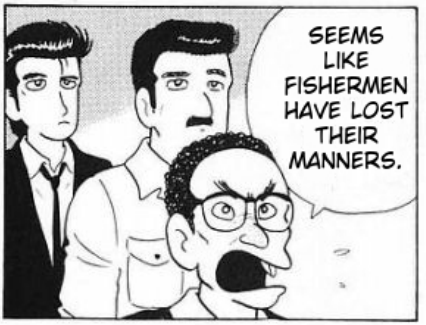

TOMORROW'S TIDE WILL BE JUST RIGHT, WE'LL REEL IN PLENTY OF SEA BREAM!

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM? THE TOP PRIZE IS MINE, LET'S HANDLE THIS LIKE GOLF!
HEH HEH HEH, TOMORROW'S SEA BREAM WILL BE MINE ALONE.

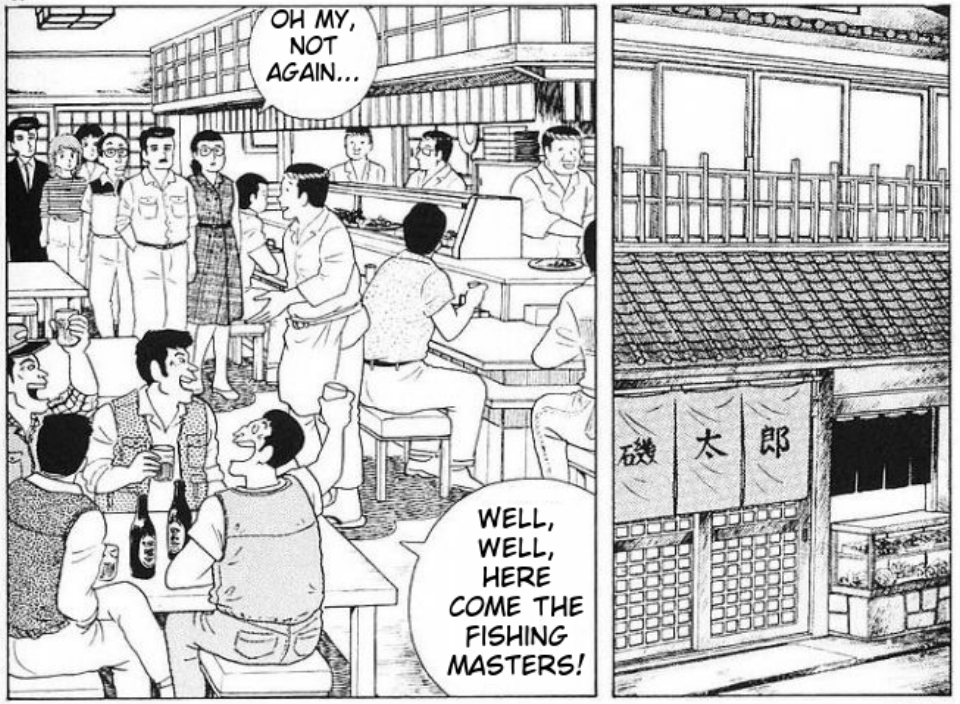
9


SEEMS LIKE FISHERMEN HAVE LOST THEIR MANNERS.

THESE GUYS ARE THE WORST.
THESE TYPES ARE BECOMING MORE COMMON THESE DAYS.

LET'S GO, LET'S GO!
SEAFOOD DISHES! SO CHARMING.
ALRIGHT THEN.
THERE'S A NEW SEAFOOD RESTAURANT NEARBY. YOU SHOULD HAVE DINNER THERE.
IT'S QUITE POPULAR, YOU KNOW.

10


OH MY, NOT AGAIN...
WELL, WELL, HERE COME THE FISHING MASTERS!
磯太郎

DELICIOUS!

THESE GENIUS ANGLERS DON'T CARE ABOUT THE TOOLS WHEN FISHING! THEY'RE SOMETHING ELSE!
TOMORROW, WE'LL GET TO SEE THEIR SKILLS IN ACTION.
ENJOY!

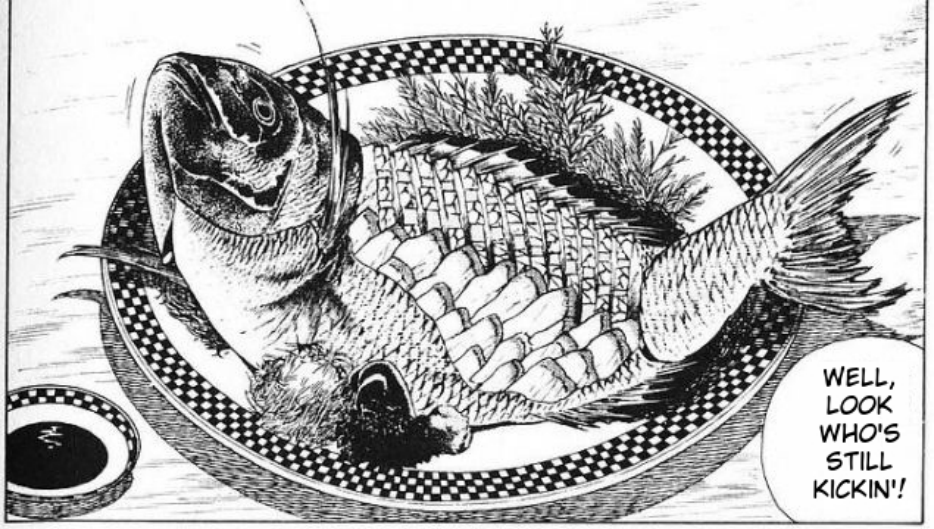
LET'S LEAVE THOSE GUYS BE AND ENJOY SOME DELICIOUS FOOD.

WELL, WELL...
WHAT AN UNPLEASANT BUNCH!

OH, THIS IS MAGNIFICENT!
HERE YOU GO, FRESHLY SLICED SEA BREAM SASHIMI.
JOYOUS, JOYOUS!

WOW, I WANNA EAT IT!
HOW ABOUT SOME SEA BREAM SASHIMI?
LET'S BOOST OUR SPIRITS BY EATING SEA BREAM ON THE EVE OF THE FISHING TRIP.

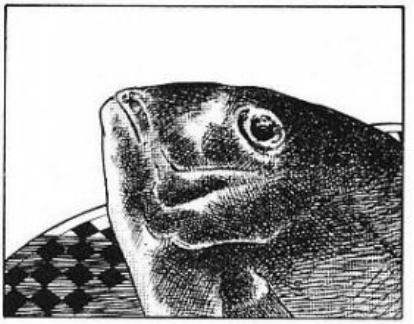
WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT FINDING SOMETHING ELSE DELICIOUS FOR US TOO?
UNDERSTOOD.


WELL, LOOK WHO'S STILL KICKIN'!

MAN, THIS THICK RICHNESS HITS THE SPOT, RIGHT?
THIS DISH IS SWIMMING IN FLAVOR!
SO DELICIOUS! TRULY AUTHENTIC!

12

TALK ABOUT LIVING IT UP!
THANK YOU FOR WAITING!
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT!



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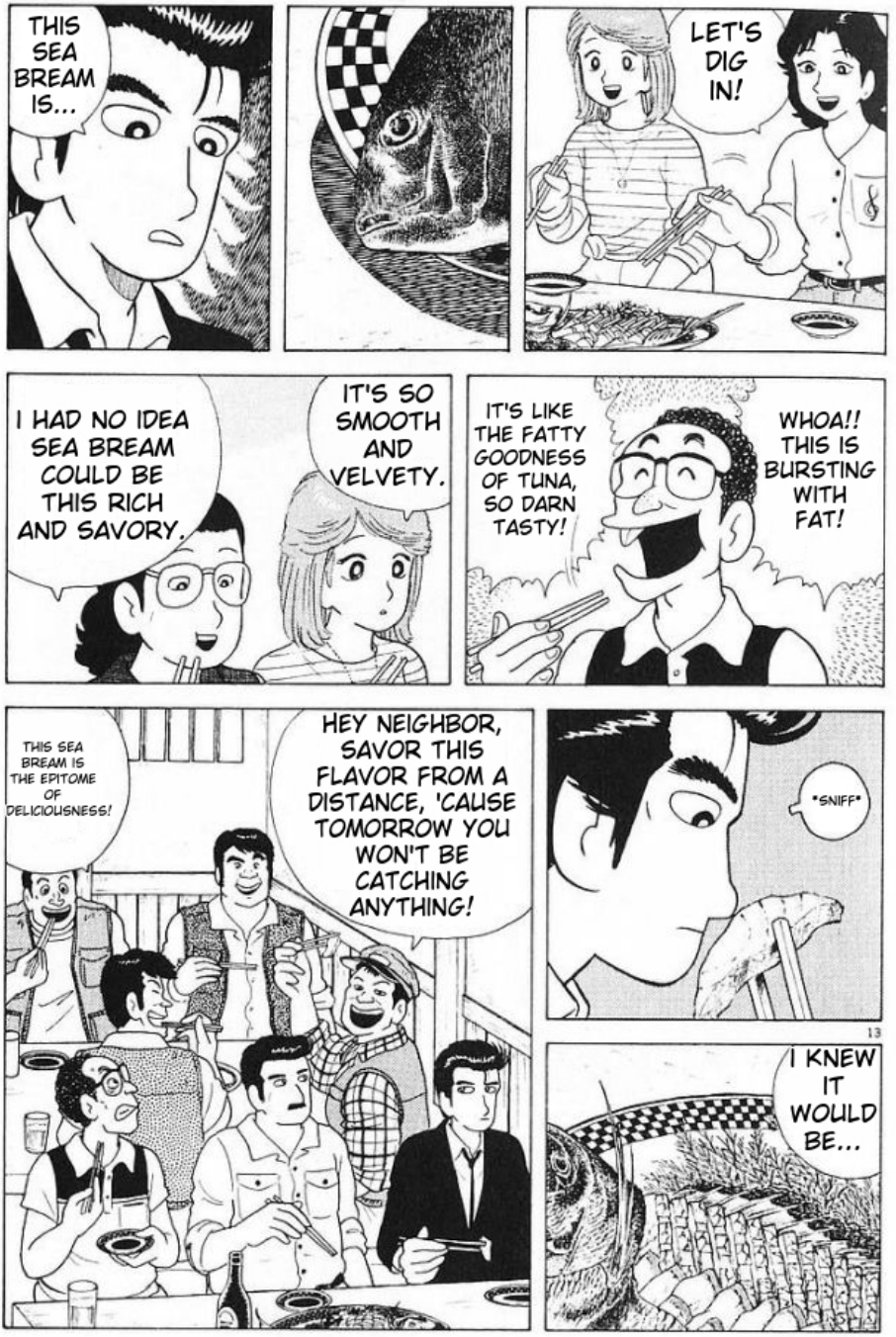
DELICIOUS!

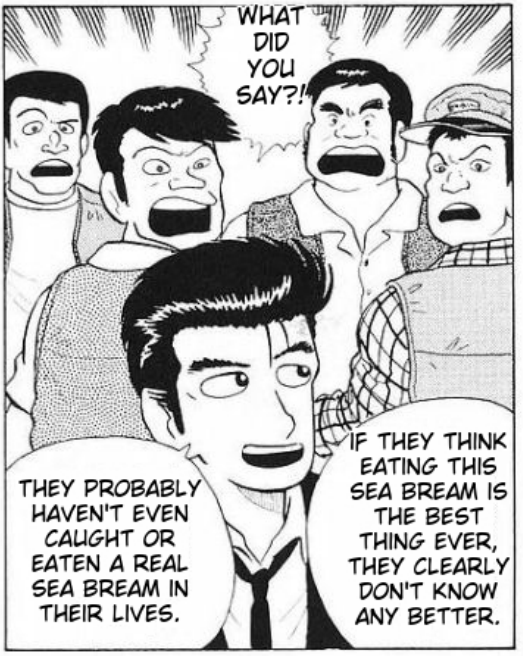

THIS SEA BREAM IS...
LET'S DIG IN!
I HAD NO IDEA SEA BREAM COULD BE THIS RICH AND SAVORY.
IT'S SO SMOOTH AND VELVETY.
IT'S LIKE THE FATTY GOODNESS OF TUNA, SO DARN TASTY!
WHOA!! THIS IS BURSTING WITH FAT!
THIS SEA BREAM IS THE EPITOME OF DELICIOUSNESS!
HEY NEIGHBOR, SAVOR THIS FLAVOR FROM A DISTANCE, 'CAUSE TOMORROW YOU WON'T BE CATCHING ANYTHING!
SNIFF
I KNEW IT WOULD BE...

わっはっは
I'M SO FED UP... SHOULD WE CHANGE SEATS?
THESE GUYS ARE RELENTLESS.
THIS IS DELICIOUS! WE'RE GONNA CATCH HEAPS OF THESE DELICIOUS SEA BREAM TOMORROW!

THESE HILLBILLIES WHO DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT FISH ARE JUST MAKING A RUCKUS, THAT'S ALL.
JUST LEAVE THEM BE.

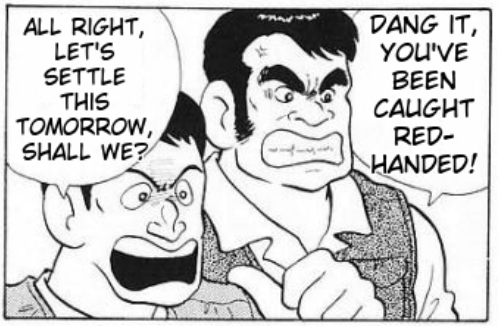
14

W-WHAT A BUNCH OF JOKERS!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE SAYING TO SEASONED FISHING PROS LIKE US?!


WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
IF THEY THINK EATING THIS SEA BREAM IS THE BEST THING EVER, THEY CLEARLY DON'T KNOW ANY BETTER.
THEY PROBABLY HAVEN'T EVEN CAUGHT OR EATEN A REAL SEA BREAM IN THEIR LIVES.

DELICIOUS!

YOU'RE CAUSING TROUBLE FOR OTHER CUSTOMERS.
HEY, FOLKS, FIGHTING IS NO GOOD HERE.


ALL RIGHT, LET'S SETTLE THIS TOMORROW, SHALL WE?
DANG IT, YOU'VE BEEN CAUGHT RED-HANDED!

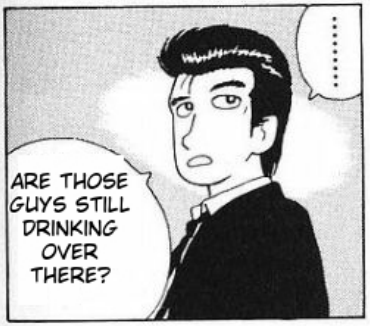
LOOKS LIKE WE'LL BE ON THE SAME BOAT TOMORROW, PERFECT TIMING.
YOU TWO WON'T GET IT EVEN IF I EXPLAIN IN DETAIL, SO I'LL SHOW YOUR CLUELESSNESS WITH MY OWN EYES.

GIVE ME A REASON WHY THIS SEA BREAM ISN'T THE REAL DEAL!

BUT WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT RED SNAPPER NOT BEING THE REAL DEAL?

IT FELT SO GOOD WHEN YOU SHUT THOSE GUYS UP SO BLUNTLY.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT 'NOT THE REAL DEAL' MEANS, BUT...
THAT DRAGON SCALE DEFINITELY WASN'T TASTY... I'LL GIVE YOU THAT MUCH.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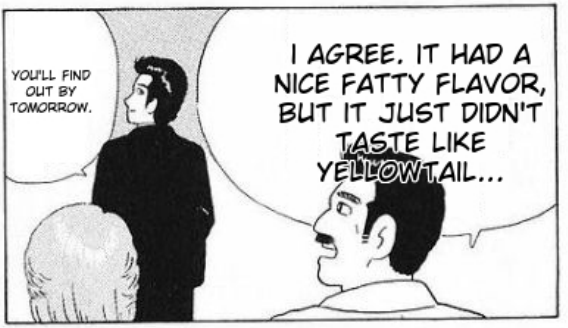
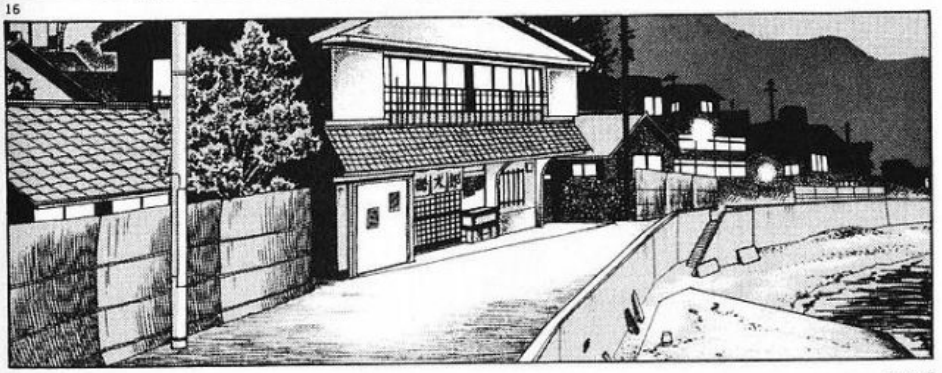
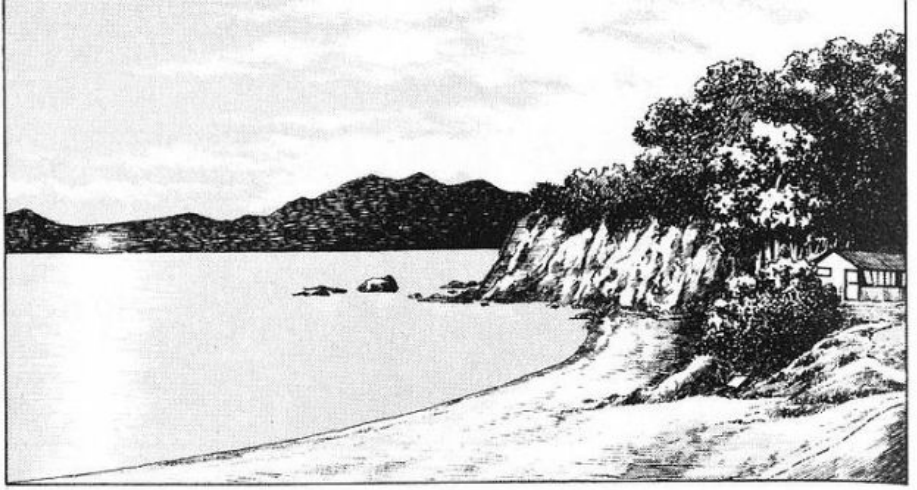
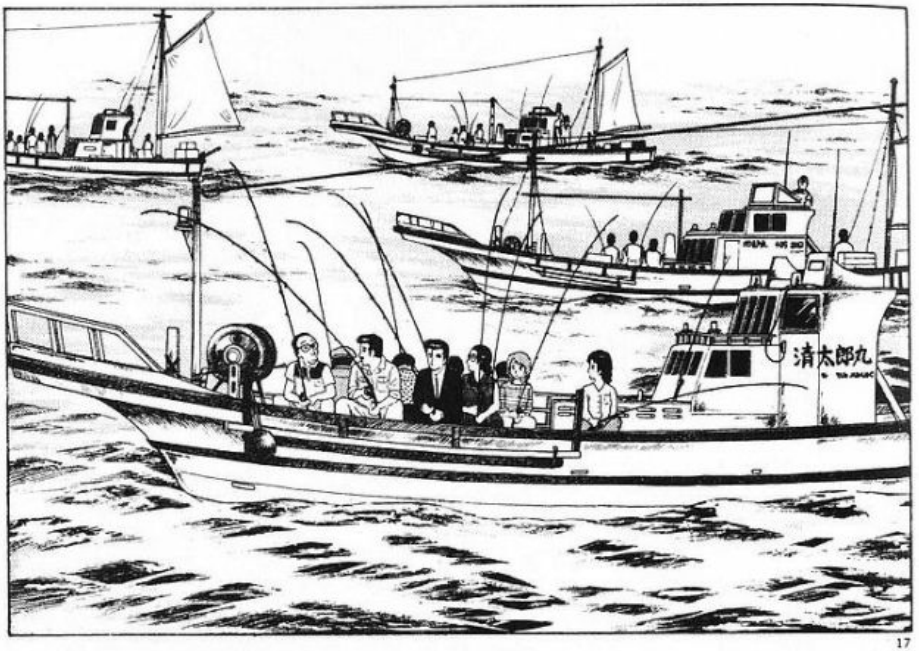
ARE THOSE GUYS STILL DRINKING OVER THERE?


I AGREE. IT HAD A NICE FATTY FLAVOR, BUT IT JUST DIDN'T TASTE LIKE YELLOWTAIL...
YOU'LL FIND OUT BY TOMORROW.

16







17

DRINKING TOO MUCH THE NIGHT BEFORE ISN'T WHAT A TRUE ANGLER DOES.
SUCH SLOPPINESS, I'M PERFECTLY FINE.
IS IT A SNAPPER?!
OH, HERE IT COMES!
DON'T PANIC, REEL IT IN SLOWLY!
ALL THEIR FANCY GEAR IS USELESS WITH THEM LIKE THIS!
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18
OH NO, THIS IS A BIG ONE! IT'S DRAGGING ME INTO THE SEA!
GIVE IT YOUR ALL! WE'LL SHOW THOSE GUYS WHAT WE'RE MADE OF!
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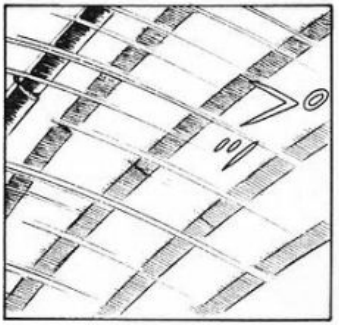
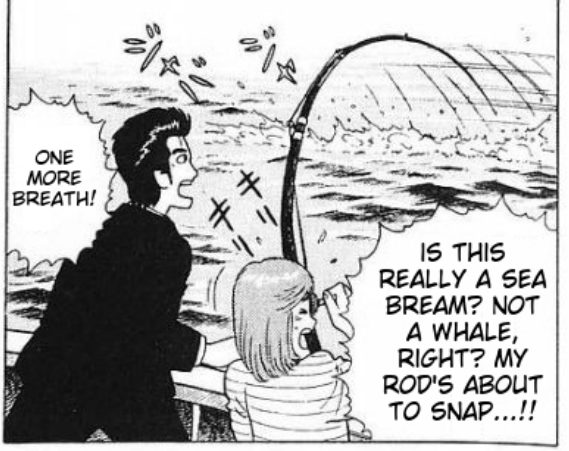
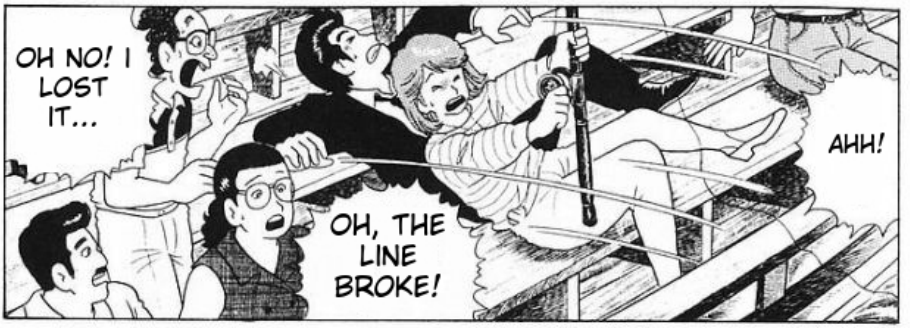
WHOA, THIS ONE IS HUGE!




ONE MORE BREATH!
IS THIS REALLY A SEA BREAM? NOT A WHALE, RIGHT? MY ROD'S ABOUT TO SNAP...!!

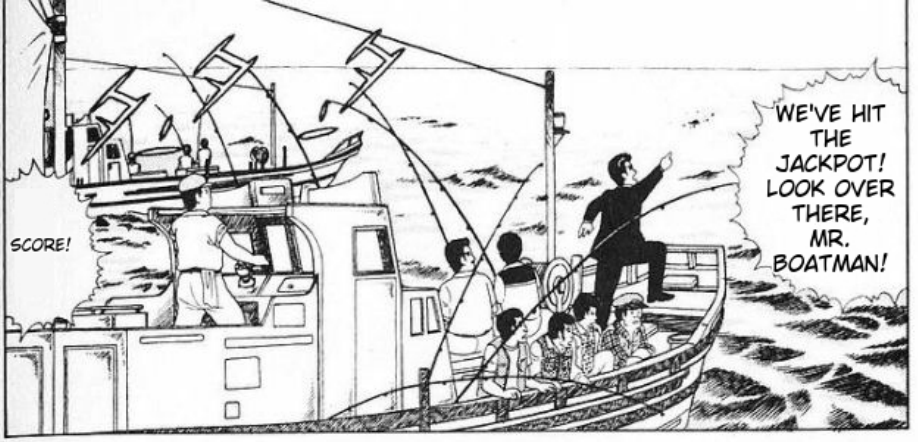

OH NO! I LOST IT...
AHH!
OH, THE LINE BROKE!

WHY...?
IF THAT'S REALLY A SEA BREAM, THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.
WHY WOULD IT BE FINE IF IT'S A SEA BREAM?

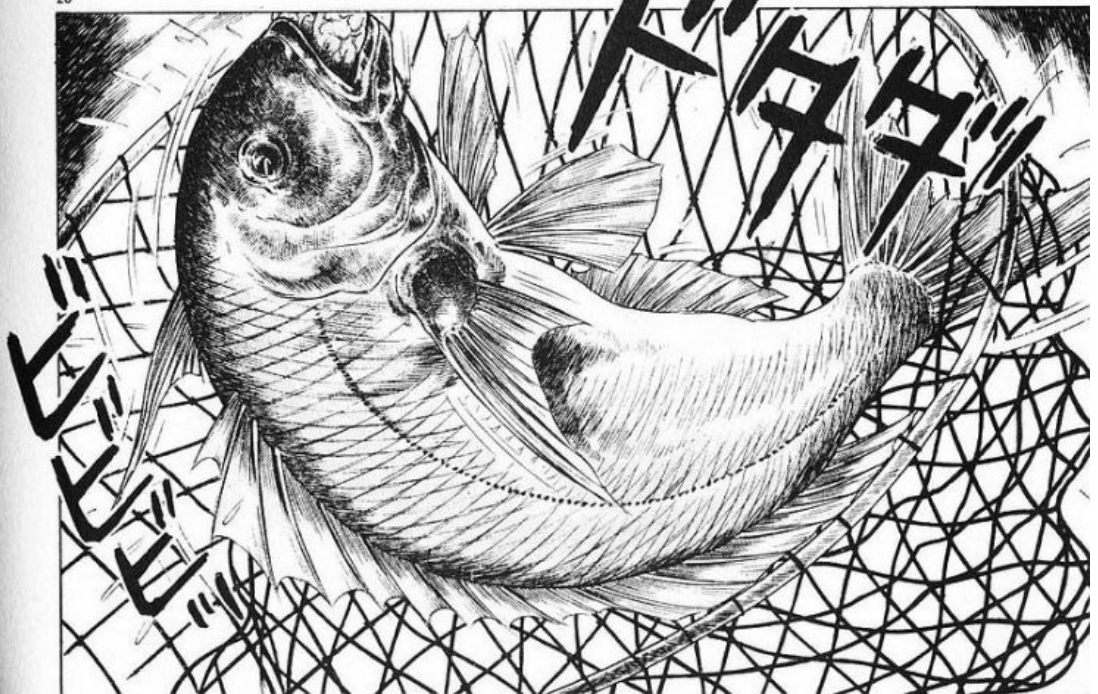
WE FINALLY CAUGHT IT...
NO WAY... WHAT SHOULD WE DO?!

ARGH, HOW FRUSTRATING!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT? THE LINE SNAPPED!
DON'T WORRY, WE'VE MADE IT THIS FAR.


SCORE!
WE'VE HIT THE JACKPOT! LOOK OVER THERE, MR. BOATMAN!

THERE ARE FISH FLOATING ON THE SURFACE!
WHAT? NO WAY! IS THAT...!?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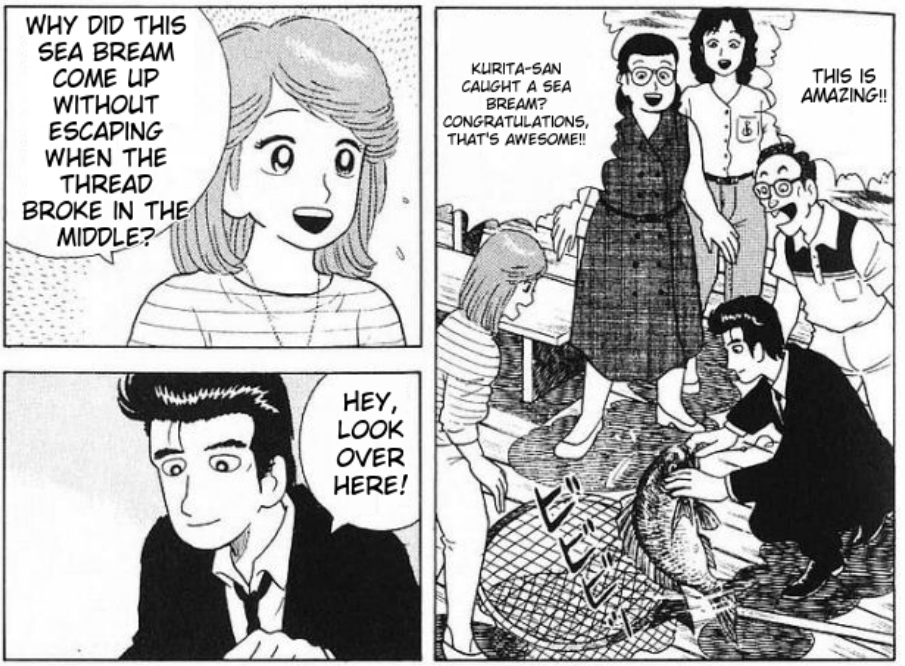
WHY DID THIS SEA BREAM COME UP WITHOUT ESCAPING WHEN THE THREAD BROKE IN THE MIDDLE?
KURITA-SAN CAUGHT A SEA BREAM? CONGRATULATIONS, THAT'S AWESOME!!
THIS IS AMAZING!!
HEY, LOOK OVER HERE!
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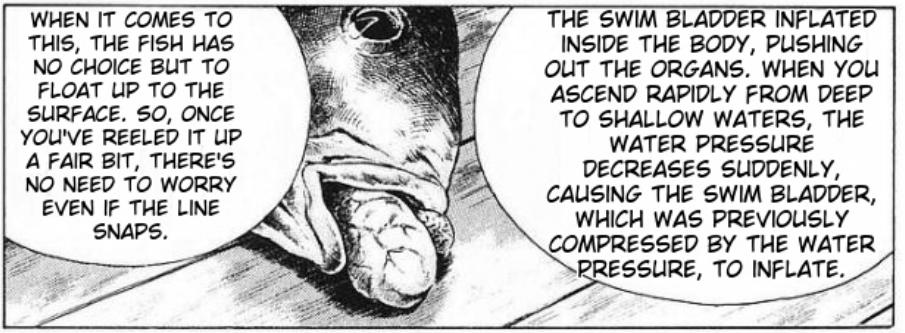
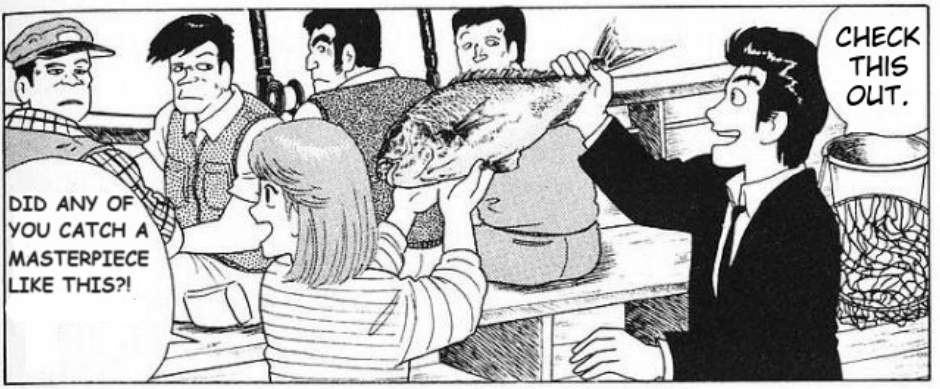

WHEN IT COMES TO THIS, THE FISH HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO FLOAT UP TO THE SURFACE. SO, ONCE YOU'VE REELED IT UP A FAIR BIT, THERE'S NO NEED TO WORRY EVEN IF THE LINE SNAPS.
THE SWIM BLADDER INFLATED INSIDE THE BODY, PUSHING OUT THE ORGANS. WHEN YOU ASCEND RAPIDLY FROM DEEP TO SHALLOW WATERS, THE WATER PRESSURE DECREASES SUDDENLY, CAUSING THE SWIM BLADDER, WHICH WAS PREVIOUSLY COMPRESSED BY THE WATER PRESSURE, TO INFLATE.

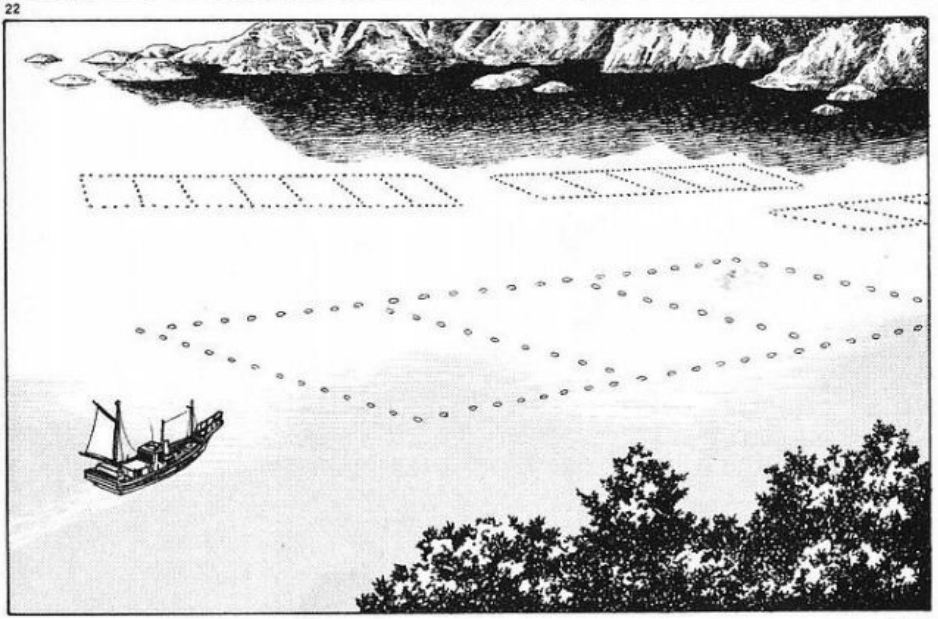
21

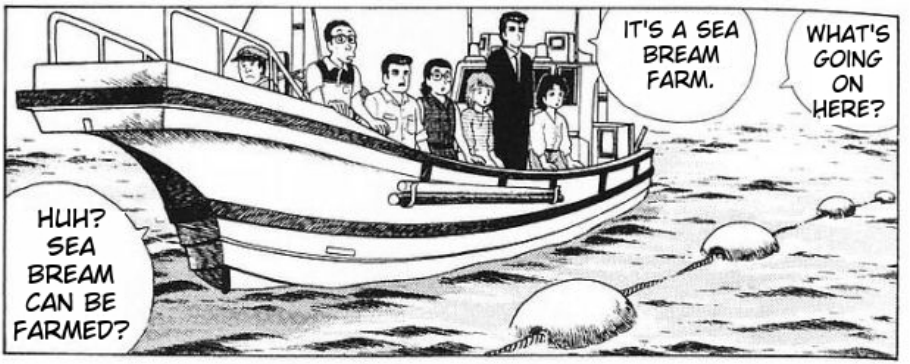
IF IT'S COME TO THIS, IT'S PROOF THAT THE SNAPPER RESIDES IN THE DEEP. DIVE DEEP, MY FRIEND, DIVE DEEP!
OH, SO THAT'S HOW IT WAS...


DID ANY OF YOU CATCH A MASTERPIECE LIKE THIS?!
CHECK THIS OUT.

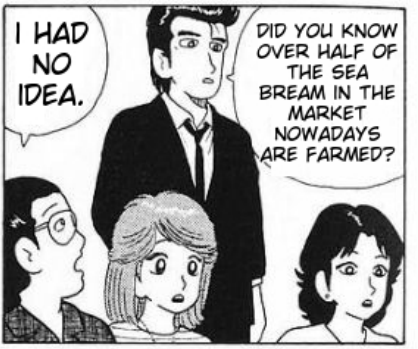
SURE.
CAN YOU TURN THE BOAT TO THE SIDE?
WELL, AS PROMISED, I'LL SHOW YOU WHICH ONES ARE THE REAL SEA BREAM AND WHICH ONES ARE IMPOSTERS.

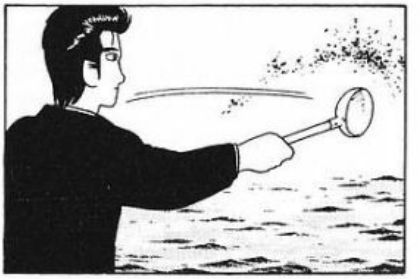
22




WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
IT'S A SEA BREAM FARM.
HUH? SEA BREAM CAN BE FARMED?

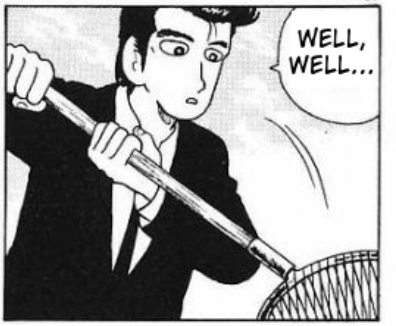
WOW! LOOK AT THAT! THE SEA BREAM IS PUTTING ON A SHOW FOR US!
THIS IS QUITE A SPECTACLE!

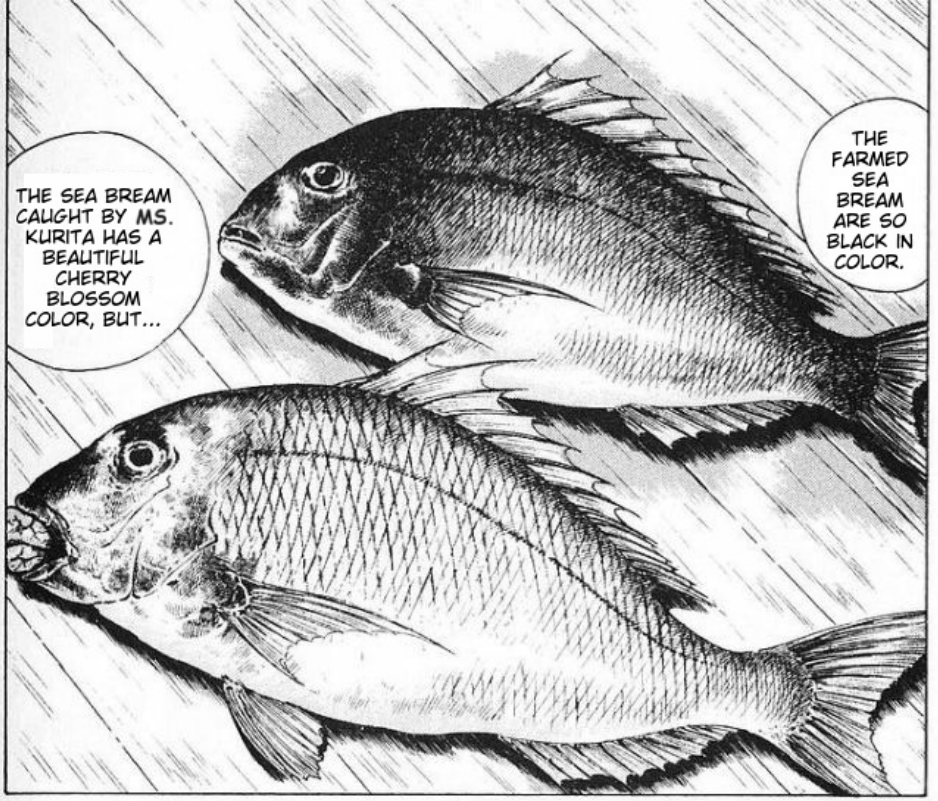

I HAD NO IDEA.
DID YOU KNOW OVER HALF OF THE SEA BREAM IN THE MARKET NOWADAYS ARE FARMED?



23

LET'S COMPARE THE FARMED SEA BREAM WITH THE ONE WE JUST CAUGHT FROM THE DEEP SEA.

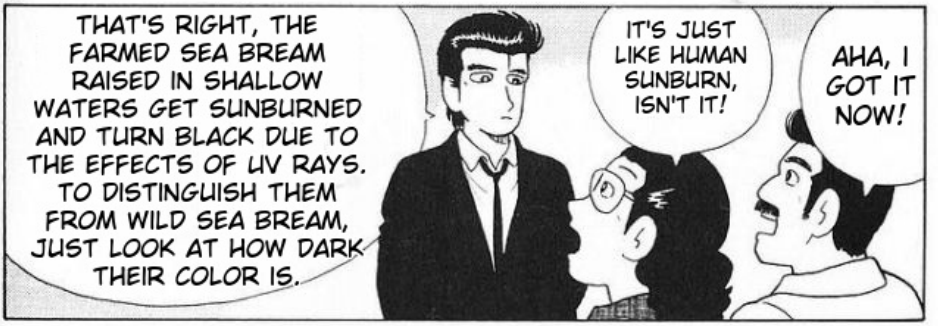

WELL, WELL...

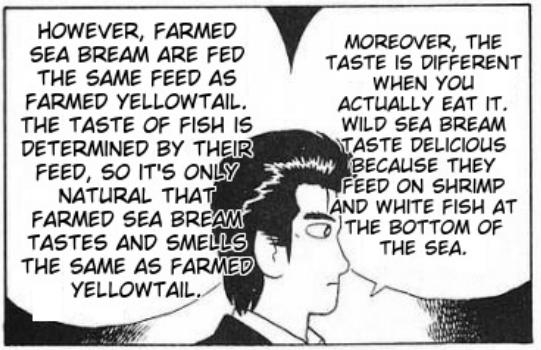

THE SEA BREAM CAUGHT BY MS. KURITA HAS A BEAUTIFUL CHERRY BLOSSOM COLOR, BUT...
THE FARMED SEA BREAM ARE SO BLACK IN COLOR.

UV RAYS, YOU SAY?!

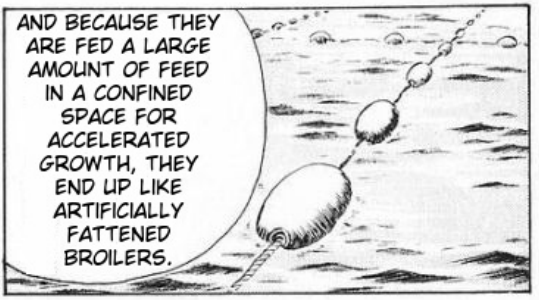
ON THE OTHER HAND, FARMED SEA BREAM ARE SURROUNDED BY NETS TO PREVENT THEM FROM ESCAPING AND ALWAYS RESIDE CLOSE TO THE SURFACE OF THE SEA. THE ISSUE LIES IN UV RAYS.
REMEMBER THIS, THE SEA BREAM CAUGHT BY MS. KURITA LIVE IN DEEP WATERS WHERE THE SWIM BLADDER SWELLS SO MUCH THAT THEIR GUTS MAY POP OUT FROM THEIR MOUTHS WHEN SUDDENLY PULLED UP.

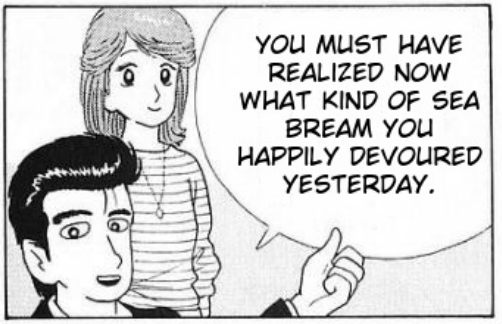
24


THAT'S RIGHT, THE FARMED SEA BREAM RAISED IN SHALLOW WATERS GET SUNBURNED AND TURN BLACK DUE TO THE EFFECTS OF UV RAYS. TO DISTINGUISH THEM FROM WILD SEA BREAM, JUST LOOK AT HOW DARK THEIR COLOR IS.
IT'S JUST LIKE HUMAN SUNBURN, ISN'T IT!
AHA, I GOT IT NOW!


HOWEVER, FARMED SEA BREAM ARE FED THE SAME FEED AS FARMED YELLOWTAIL. THE TASTE OF FISH IS DETERMINED BY THEIR FEED, SO IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT FARMED SEA BREAM TASTES AND SMELLS THE SAME AS FARMED YELLOWTAIL.
MOREOVER, THE TASTE IS DIFFERENT WHEN YOU ACTUALLY EAT IT. WILD SEA BREAM TASTE DELICIOUS BECAUSE THEY FEED ON SHRIMP AND WHITE FISH AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

I SAID YOU GUYS DIDN'T UNDERSTAND FISH BECAUSE WHEN I SAW THE COLOR OF THE SEA BREAM SERVED SASHIMI YESTERDAY, YOU DIDN'T SEEM TO REALIZE IT WAS FARMED SEA BREAM.


AND BECAUSE THEY ARE FED A LARGE AMOUNT OF FEED IN A CONFINED SPACE FOR ACCELERATED GROWTH, THEY END UP LIKE ARTIFICIALLY FATTENED BROILERS.


YOU MUST HAVE REALIZED NOW WHAT KIND OF SEA BREAM YOU HAPPILY DEVOURED YESTERDAY.

INDEED, YESTERDAY'S SEA BREAM HAD THE SAME TASTE AND SMELL AS YELLOWTAIL.
I SEE, SO THAT'S WHY IT TASTED ODDLY FATTY.

YOU TALK BIG, BUT WE COULDN'T CATCH A SINGLE FISH, YOU KNOW.
I SURRENDER, I SURRENDER.
...MAYBE YOU SHOULD STUDY MORE ABOUT FISH INSTEAD OF SHOWING OFF YOUR GEAR...

IT'S JUST DUMB LUCK, THAT'S ALL.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT JUST NOW?

WELL, IT'S LIKE A BEGINNER IN A HIGH-STAKES MAHJONG GAME PULLING OFF A 'MANGAN' WIN WITH JUST THE 'DORA' AND 'URADORA' TILES.

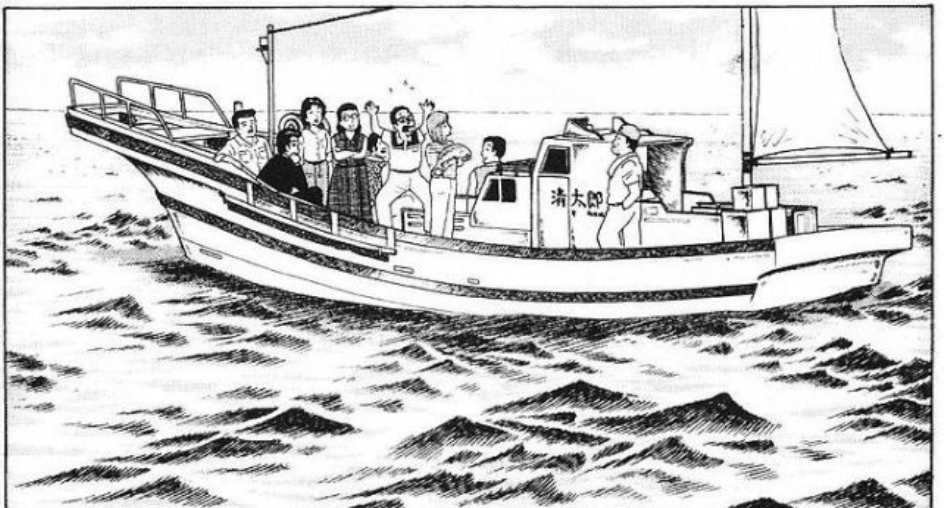
WELL, DON'T FORGET THAT KURITA-KUN CAUGHT IT BECAUSE IT GOT ALL BLOATED UP...

KURITA, YOU'RE A FISHING GENIUS! A MAESTRO! IT'S NO FLUKE, I TELL YA!

HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! I TAKE IT BACK! IT TAKES A FISHING GENIUS!!!

WE'RE HEADING BACK TO THE FISHING LODGE TO FEAST ON THIS SEA BREAM TOGETHER, BUT MR. VICE PRESIDENT, YOU'LL HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH THAT FARMED SEA BREAM OF YOURS.

ALRIGHT, THE VICE PRESIDENT HAS SPOKEN!



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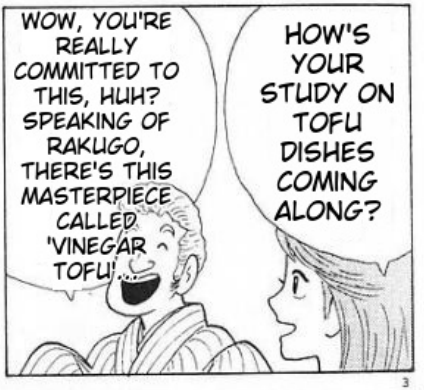
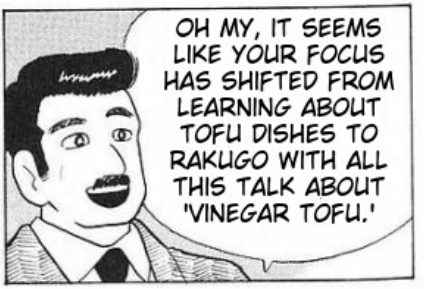
HE'S REALLY GOTTEN THE HANG OF WEARING A KIMONO.
OH, MR. BLACK!
GOOD EVENING, EVERYONE, YOU ALL LOOK SO LIVELY!
2
HEH HEH HEH, I'M STILL A ROOKIE, STRUGGLING TO LEARN THE EDO DIALECT FOR RAKUGO...
YOU LOOK LIKE A SPLENDID RAKUGO STORYTELLER, NOW!

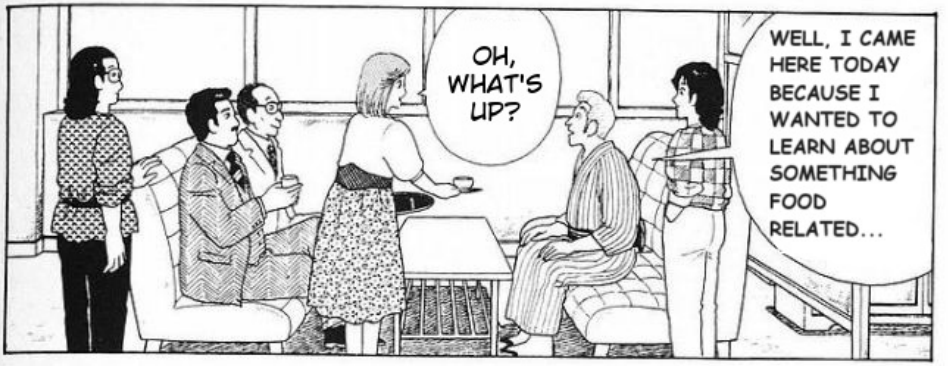
BUT YOU'RE QUITE THE QUICK LEARNER, SO YOU'LL PICK UP THE STORIES IN NO TIME.

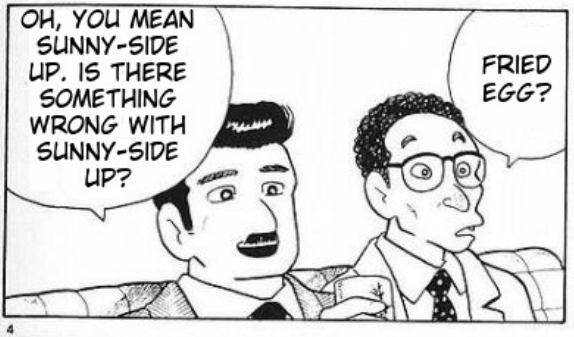
I'M AIMING TO BECOME A POPULAR RAKUGO STORYTELLER, TAKING INSPIRATION FROM THAT. I'M PUTTING MY HEART AND SOUL INTO IT, SO I HOPE YOU'LL SUPPORT ME AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.
THANK YOU. THERE WAS A RAKUGO STORYTELLER FROM YOKOHAMA DURING THE MEIJI ERA WHO WAS ORIGINALLY FROM ENGLAND AND WAS QUITE POPULAR.

IT SEEMS YOU'RE DOING WELL.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO EAVESDROP ON YOUR CONVERSATION, MR. BLACK.
OOPS, IT SEEMS EVEN THE BOSS HAS CAUGHT ON TO IT.


WOW, YOU'RE REALLY COMMITTED TO THIS, HUH? SPEAKING OF RAKUGO, THERE'S THIS MASTERPIECE CALLED 'VINEGAR TOFU!'
HOW'S YOUR STUDY ON TOFU DISHES COMING ALONG?


OH MY, IT SEEMS LIKE YOUR FOCUS HAS SHIFTED FROM LEARNING ABOUT TOFU DISHES TO RAKUGO WITH ALL THIS TALK ABOUT 'VINEGAR TOFU.'


OH, WHAT'S UP?
WELL, I CAME HERE TODAY BECAUSE I WANTED TO LEARN ABOUT SOMETHING FOOD RELATED...

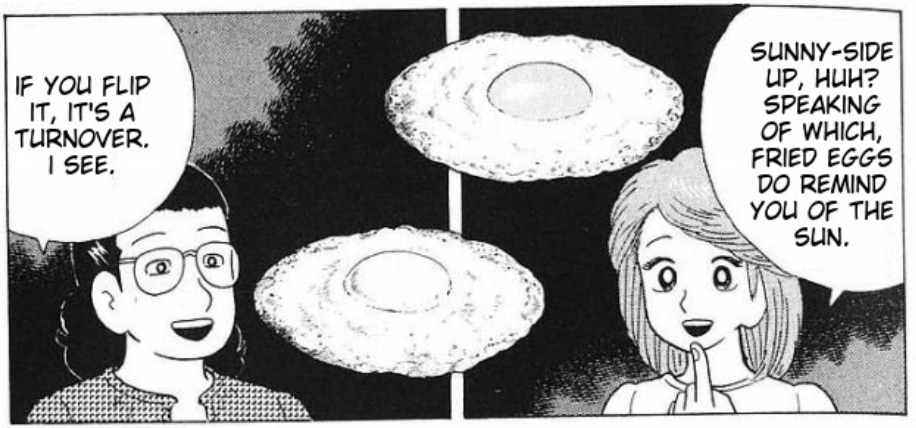

OH, YOU MEAN SUNNY-SIDE UP. IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH SUNNY-SIDE UP?
FRIED EGG?

I WANTED TO LEARN ABOUT FRIED EGGS...

4

OVER EASY IS WHEN YOU FLIP IT AND COOK BOTH SIDES.
SUNNY-SIDE UP IS WHEN YOU COOK ONE SIDE OF THE EGG ONLY.
EXACTLY! YOU GOT IT, DUDE!

COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT 'SUNNY-SIDE UP' AND 'OVER EASY' ARE CALLED IN JAPANESE?
OVER EASY, WHAT'S THAT?
SUNNY-SIDE UP?


IF YOU FLIP IT, IT'S A TURNOVER. I SEE.
SUNNY-SIDE UP, HUH? SPEAKING OF WHICH, FRIED EGGS DO REMIND YOU OF THE SUN.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT... JAPANESE FOLKS DON'T DO THE FLIP, HUH...
SO, WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH THAT?

WE GET THE FORM, BUT WHAT SHOULD WE CALL IT, THOUGH?

THAT'S RIGHT, THAT'S RIGHT.
IN JAPAN, IT'S NOT COMMON TO COOK BOTH SIDES OF A FRIED EGG, IS IT?

AT THE UPCOMING IFEC CONFERENCE, I GOTTA REPORT ON THE REALITY OF SUNNY-SIDE UP AND OVER-EASY IN JAPAN.
WELL, ACTUALLY, I'M ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE 'INTERNATIONAL FRIED EGG CONFERENCE' COMMITTEE, AND –

WHAT KIND OF ISSUES ARE THERE ABOUT FRIED EGGS, THOUGH?
WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT?!
AN "INTERNATIONAL FRIED EGG CONFERENCE" YOU SAY?!
IT'S A GLOBAL GATHERING TO DISCUSS VARIOUS ISSUES RELATED TO FRIED EGGS, LITERALLY, ON AN INTERNATIONAL SCALE...
YEAH, THEY'RE DEBATING IMPORTANT STUFF LIKE WHETHER SUNNY-SIDE UP OR OVER-EASY IS BETTER...
UGH, CAN YOU BELIEVE HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE TIME FOR THIS?
THE UPCOMING TOKYO EVENT WILL BRING TOGETHER OVER 300 COMMISSIONERS FROM 75 COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE.
GATHERING IN DROVES TO DISCUSS SUCH MATTERS?
6
WELL, IT MIGHT BE WORTH PEEKING AT LEAST ONCE.
WOW, I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE'S A CONFERENCE LIKE THAT!
I HEAR YA, BUT FRIED EGGS MAY SEEM SIMPLE, BUT THEY'RE A VERSATILE AND FUNDAMENTAL DISH, FULL OF SURPRISES.

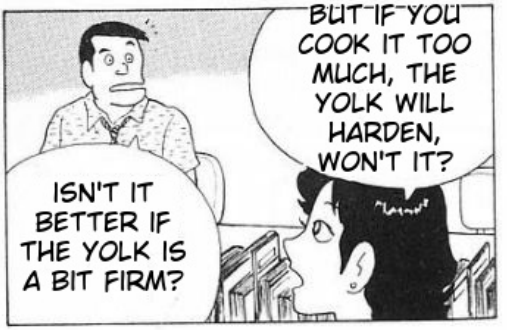
UM... ABOUT THE TURNOVER FROM EARLIER...

NOT REALLY. I JUST DISLIKE IT WHEN THE WHITES TURN INTO A MUSHY MESS.
IF YOU COOK IT WELL ENOUGH, THE WHITE WON'T TURN INTO A MUSHY MESS.

REALLY? THAT'S GREAT! THANK YOU FOR REPRESENTING THE TURNOVER TEAM EVEN AMONG THE JAPANESE!
I WON'T CALL IT A TURNOVER, BUT I ALWAYS EAT MY SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS LIKE THAT.

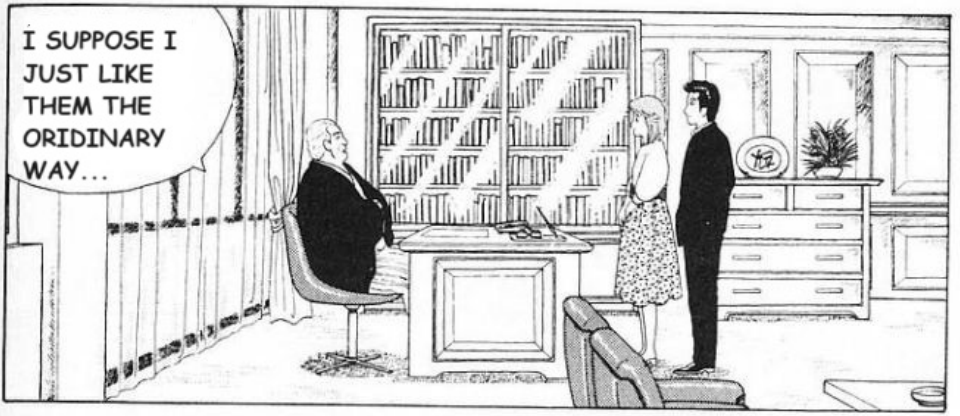
TURNING BOTH SIDES IS SACRILEGE. A SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGG IS ALL ABOUT THAT YELLOW YOLK IN THE CENTER, SO IF BOTH SIDES TURN WHITE, IT'S JUST PLAIN TACKY.

YUCK. I HATE IT WHEN THE WHITES ARE TOUGH. I LIKE THE YOLK RUNNY.


BUT IF YOU COOK IT TOO MUCH, THE YOLK WILL HARDEN, WON'T IT?
ISN'T IT BETTER IF THE YOLK IS A BIT FIRM?

SORRY FOR BEING SO RUSTIC!
WOW, THAT'S SO RUSTIC!
I LIKE MINE THAT WAY TOO, AND. NOTHING BEATS ADDING SOY SAUCE.
YOU GUYS JUST DON'T KNOW THE DELICIOUSNESS OF EGGS, HUH?
EEK, WHAT A WEIRDO!
HEY, DON'T BE SO JUDGMENTAL!
I THINK I'LL STICK WITH A SPRINKLE OF SALT AND A DASH OF PEPPER.
I LIKE MINE WITH A RUNNY YOLK AND A DOLLOP OF KETCHUP.
I PERSONALLY LOVE POURING TONKATSU SAUCE ALL OVER MINE.
8
AH, IT'S JUST A COMMON FOOD, YOU KNOW.
...EVERYONE SURE HAS THEIR OWN STRONG OPINIONS, HUH?
YOU KNOW, EVERYONE'S QUITE PARTICULAR ABOUT THEIR FRIED EGGS, AREN'T THEY?
WELL, WELL, NOT BAD AT ALL! QUITE IMPRESSIVE.

IF PEOPLE ARE SO PASSIONATE ABOUT FRIED EGGS TO THIS EXTENT, I WONDER WHAT WOULD HAPPEN ON AN INTERNATIONAL LEVEL!
I'M CURIOUS TO SEE WHAT THEY'LL DISCUSS.
SO, HOW ABOUT IT, FOLKS? HOW ABOUT JOINING OUR IFEC?
THAT SOUNDS INTERESTING!
WELL THEN, WHY DON'T WE GO AROUND AND ASK PEOPLE AROUND US ABOUT THEIR OPINIONS ON FRIED EGGS AS WELL?
OUR CULTURAL DEPARTMENT CAN'T JUST SIT IDLY BY.
WHAT A WICKED BUNCH!
BUT IT SEEMS LIKE I'VE COMPLETELY FALLEN UNDER MR. BLACK'S SPELL.
9
SHE'S REALLY GIVING ME THE EVIL EYE OVER THIS FRIED EGG ISSUE.



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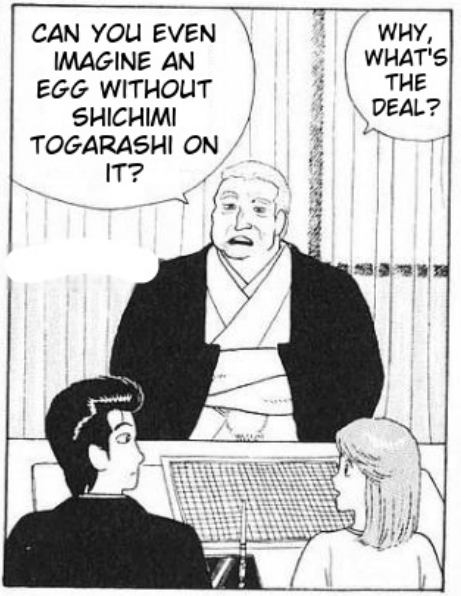
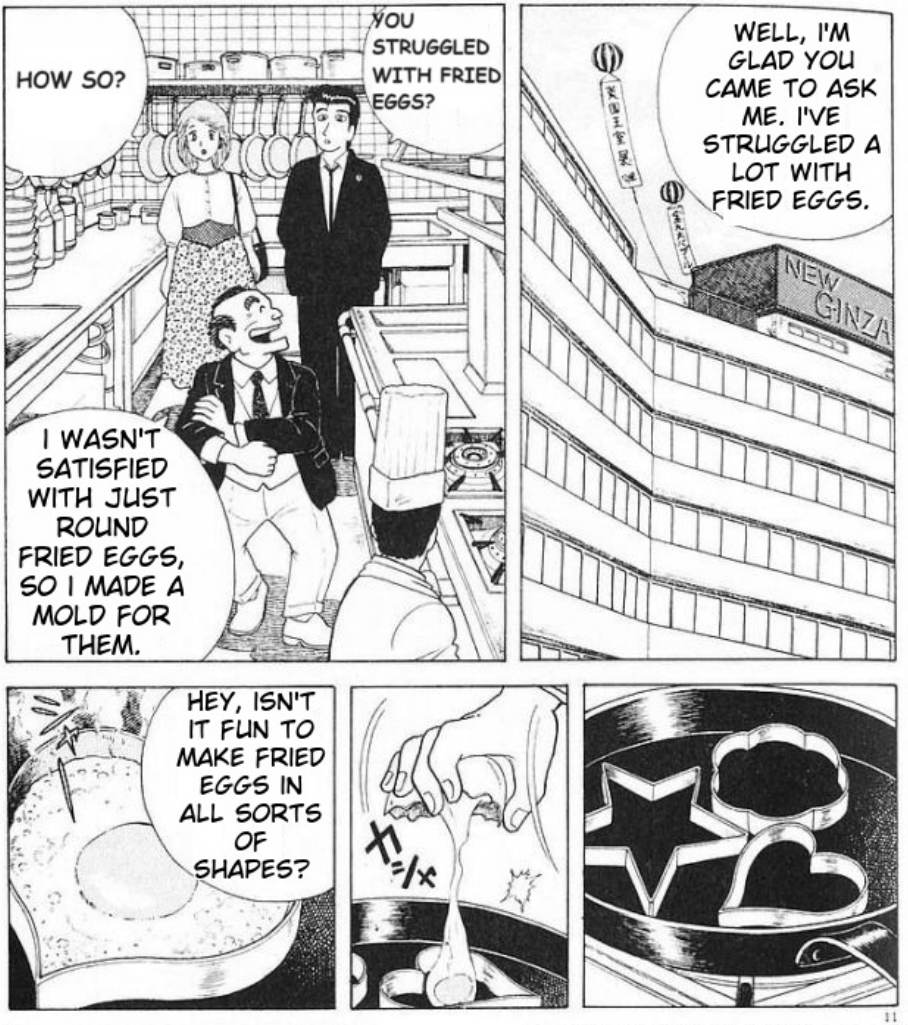
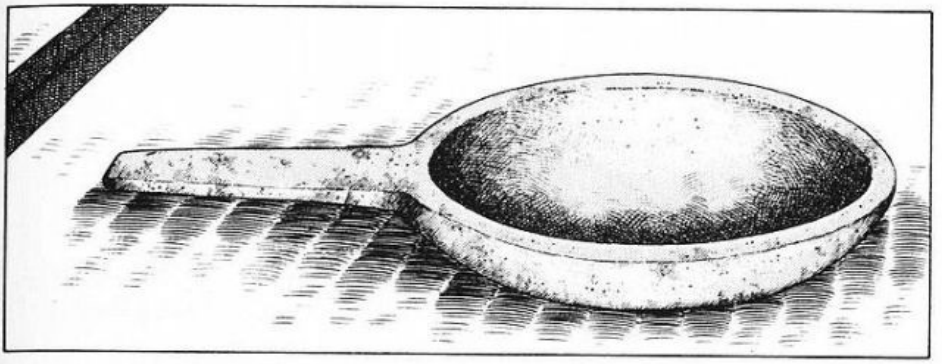
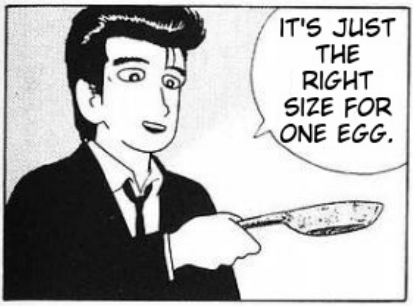


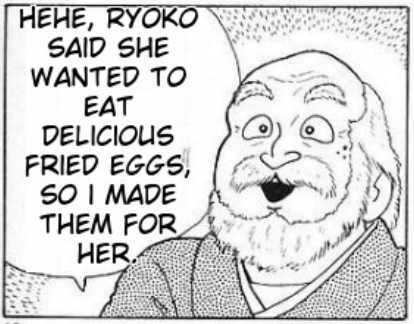
NOTE: SHICHIMI TOGARASHI IS A JAPANESE SPICE BLEND FEATURING, AMONG OTHER THINGS, CHILI FLAKES AND SESAME SEEDS.


HOW SO?
YOU STRUGGLED WITH FRIED EGGS?
I WASN'T SATISFIED WITH JUST ROUND FRIED EGGS, SO I MADE A MOLD FOR THEM.
WELL, I'M GLAD YOU CAME TO ASK ME. I'VE STRUGGLED A LOT WITH FRIED EGGS.
NEW GINZA
HEY, ISN'T IT FUN TO MAKE FRIED EGGS IN ALL SORTS OF SHAPES?
カシャ
WHAT'S IFEC ANYWAY...
ITAYAMA-SAN, WOULD YOU JOIN US FOR THE IFEC AS WELL?
WELL, IT'S QUITE AMUSING!




IT'S JUST THE RIGHT SIZE FOR ONE EGG.

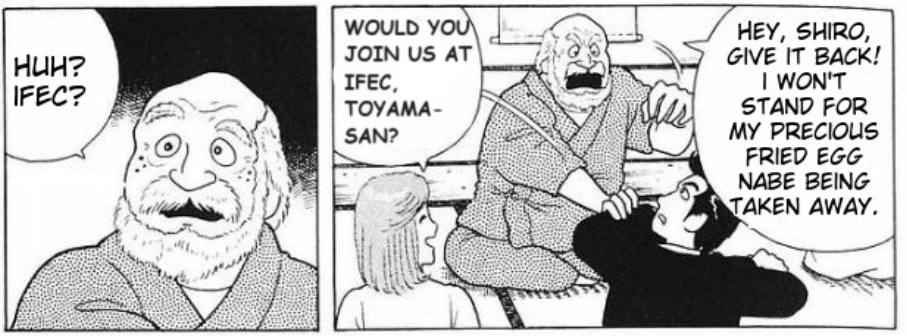
AWW, HOW ADORABLE!
THIS HERE IS MY HOMEMADE POT FOR FRYING EGGS.

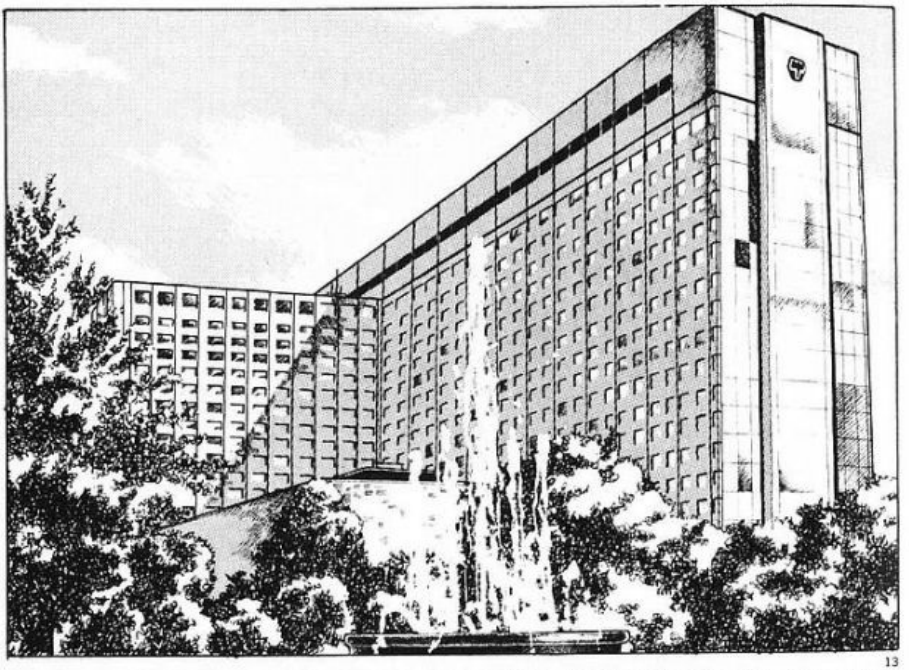

HEHE, RYOKO SAID SHE WANTED TO EAT DELICIOUS FRIED EGGS, SO I MADE THEM FOR HER.

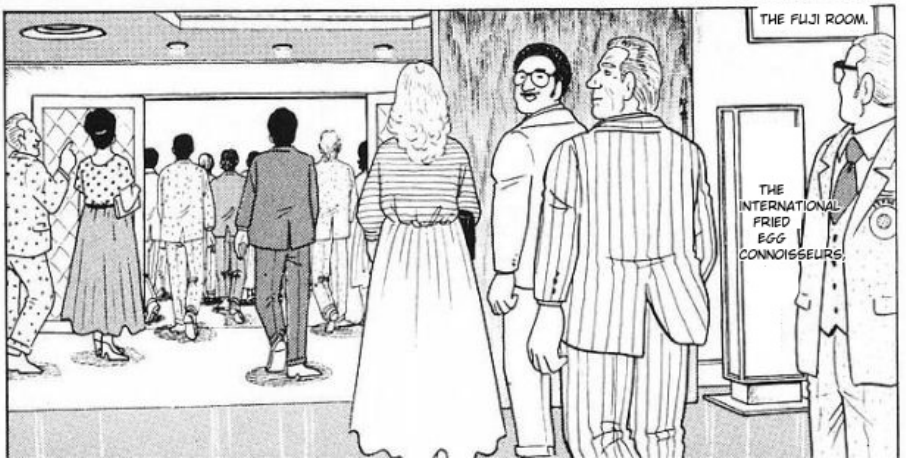
12

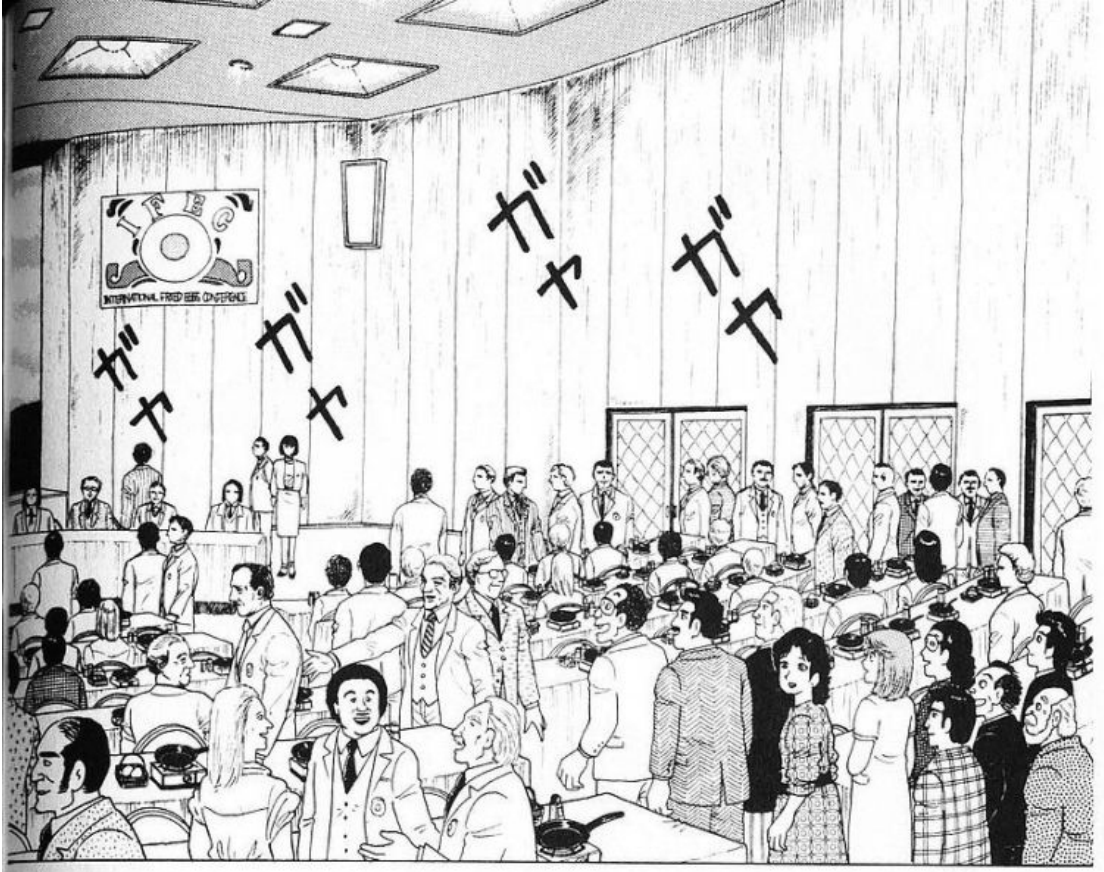
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GO EAT SOMETHING TASTY WITH THE MONEY WE GET FROM SELLING THIS TO THE ART DEALER.
UGH...

MY CUTE RYOKO.
FOOD COOKED IN THE CERAMIC POT MADE BY TOJIN-KUN IS ALWAYS DELICIOUS.


HUH? IFEC?
WOULD YOU JOIN US AT IFEC, TOYAMA-SAN?
HEY, SHIRO, GIVE IT BACK! I WON'T STAND FOR MY PRECIOUS FRIED EGG NABE BEING TAKEN AWAY.




THE FUJI ROOM.
THE INTERNATIONAL FRIED EGG CONNOISSEURS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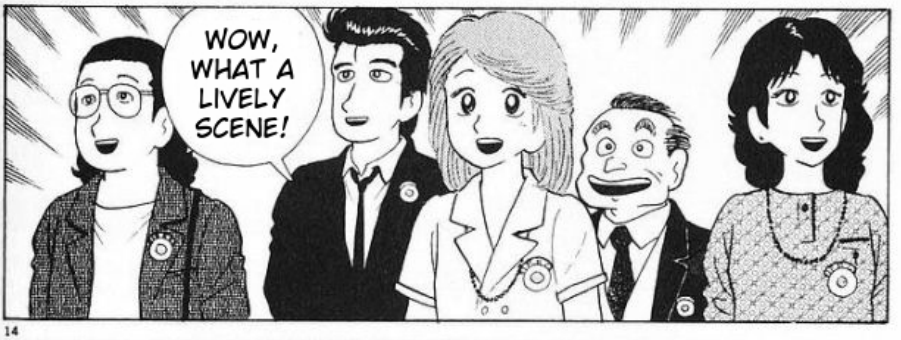
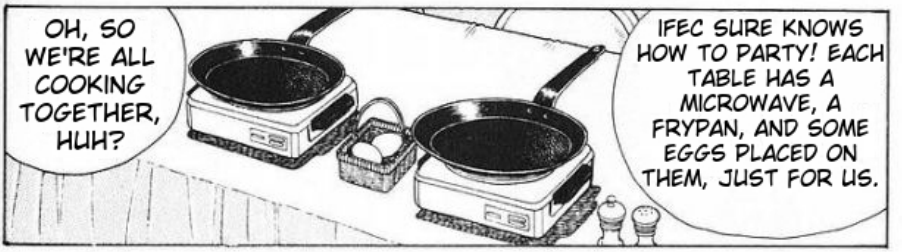
IFEC
INTERNATIONAL FRIED EGG CONFERENCE


WOW, WHAT A LIVELY SCENE!

14


OH, SO WE'RE ALL COOKING TOGETHER, HUH?
IFEC SURE KNOWS HOW TO PARTY! EACH TABLE HAS A MICROWAVE, A FRYPAN, AND SOME EGGS PLACED ON THEM, JUST FOR US.

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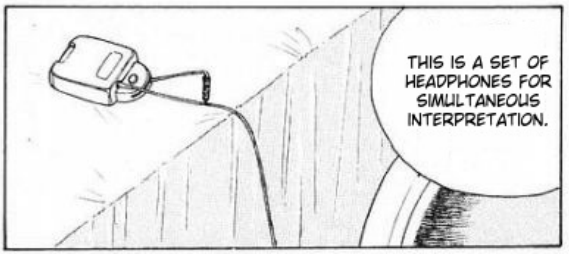
INTERNATIONAL FRIED EGGS CONFERENCE

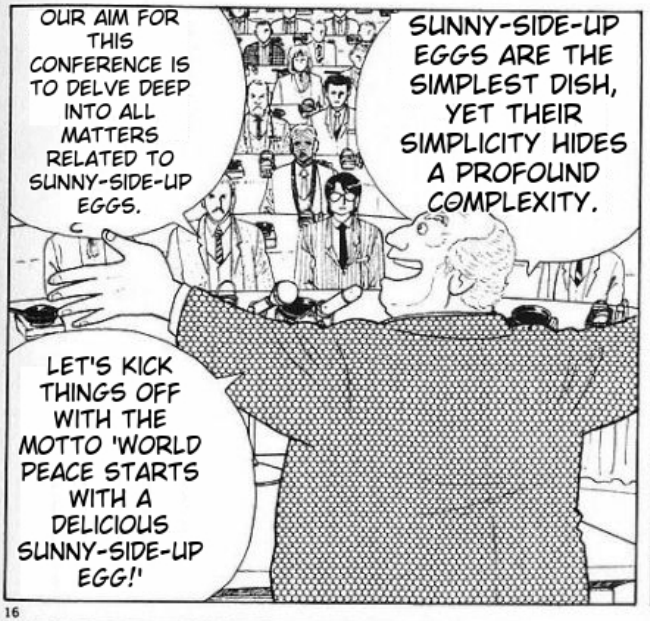
15

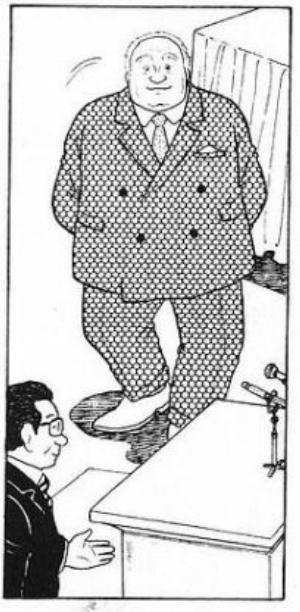

THIS IS A SET OF HEADPHONES FOR SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETATION.

WOW, JUST LIKE THE UNITED NATIONS!

EVERYONE, PLEASE COME OVER HERE.

ONAL FRIED EGGS CONFERENCE
FIRST, LET'S WELCOME CHAIRMAN REGGIE TO SAY A FEW WORDS.
TODAY MARKS THE BEGINNING OF THE 'INTERNATIONAL SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGG CONFERENCE' JAPAN CHAPTER.


OUR AIM FOR THIS CONFERENCE IS TO DELVE DEEP INTO ALL MATTERS RELATED TO SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS.
SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS ARE THE SIMPLEST DISH, YET THEIR SIMPLICITY HIDES A PROFOUND COMPLEXITY.
LET'S KICK THINGS OFF WITH THE MOTTO 'WORLD PEACE STARTS WITH A DELICIOUS SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGG!'



16

TODAY, WE HAVE MS. HANAMURA AND MR. MITANI JOINING US AS WELL.

THE MORE WE TALK, THE MORE EXTRAVAGANT AND FUN IT GETS.

OH NO, I CAN'T MAKE OVER-EASY EGGS TO SAVE MY LIFE...
WELL, LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOT SOME PRACTICING TO DO.
OH, I'M SO EXCITED!
WELL, YOU SEE, I'M A PASSIONATE OVER-EASY ADVOCATE.
INTERNATIONAL FRIED EGGS CONFERENCE
THE ETERNAL CHALLENGE WHEN EATING SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS IS WHEN TO CONSUME THE YOLK. PLEASE WATCH THE VIDEO.
FIRST UP, LET'S ASK MONSIEUR FRIT FROM FRANCE TO GIVE US A PROGRESS REPORT ON HOW TO EAT SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS.
17
LEAVING SOME BEHIND MAKES IT LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HOARDING YOUR FAVORITES AND THAT'S JUST NOT A GOOD LOOK...

THOUGH, SUCKING OUT JUST THE YOLK'S GOODNESS FIRST IS JUST PLAIN UNCOUTH.
YOU COULD ALSO TRY PLACING A BITE ON EACH PIECE OF BREAD.
HERE'S AN EXAMPLE FROM AN AMERICAN - SLICING IT FINELY BOTH VERTICALLY AND HORIZONTALLY...

18

I CAN'T FORGIVE THE WAY YOU JUST ATE THAT LAST BITE! CHOPPING IT UP LIKE THAT MAKES SUNNY SIDE UP AND OVER-EASY INDISTINGUISHABLE.
ブーブー
NOW, LET'S DISCUSS THE PROPER WAY TO EAT FRIED EGGS IN LIGHT OF MR. FRIT'S RECENT CRITIQUE.

THEN I START WITH THE WHITES, SAVING THE YOLK FOR LAST. THAT WAY, NO YOLK ENDS UP ON THE PLATE!
I LIKE TO BREAK THE YOLK, SPRINKLE IT OVER TORN PIECES OF BREAD, AND SAVOR EVERY BITE.

WAIT A MINUTE, WHETHER YOU LIKE THE YOLK COOKED HARD OR RUNNY IS A WHOLE DIFFERENT DEBATE!
NO WORRIES ABOUT THE YOLK RUNNING ALL OVER THE PLATE IF YOU COOK IT HARD!

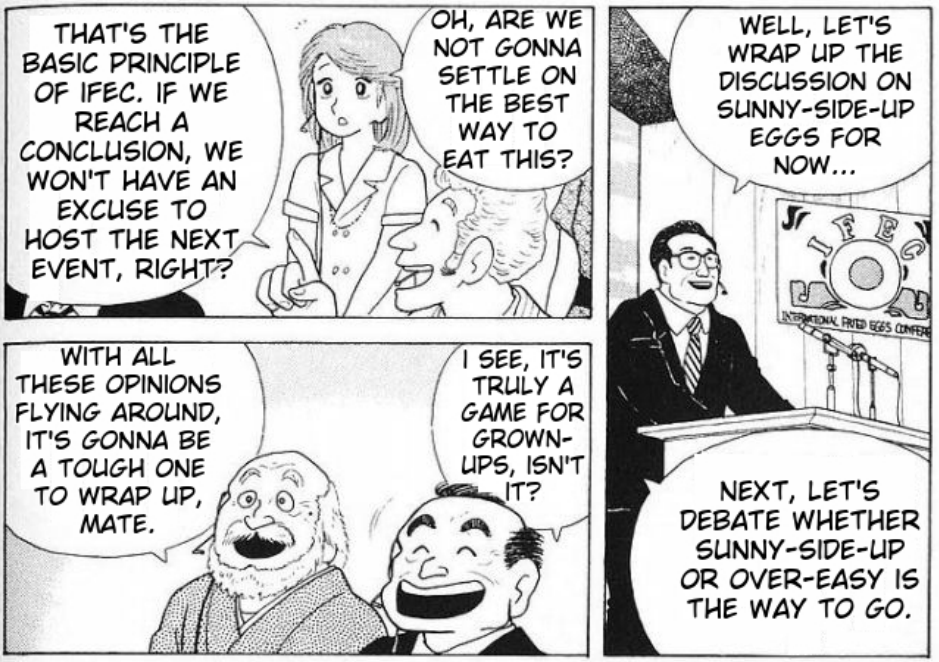
FRIED EGGS AREN'T JUST FOR THE BREAD-LOVING FOLKS; US RICE-EATING PEOPLE ALSO LOVE THEM!
HEY, REMEMBER,

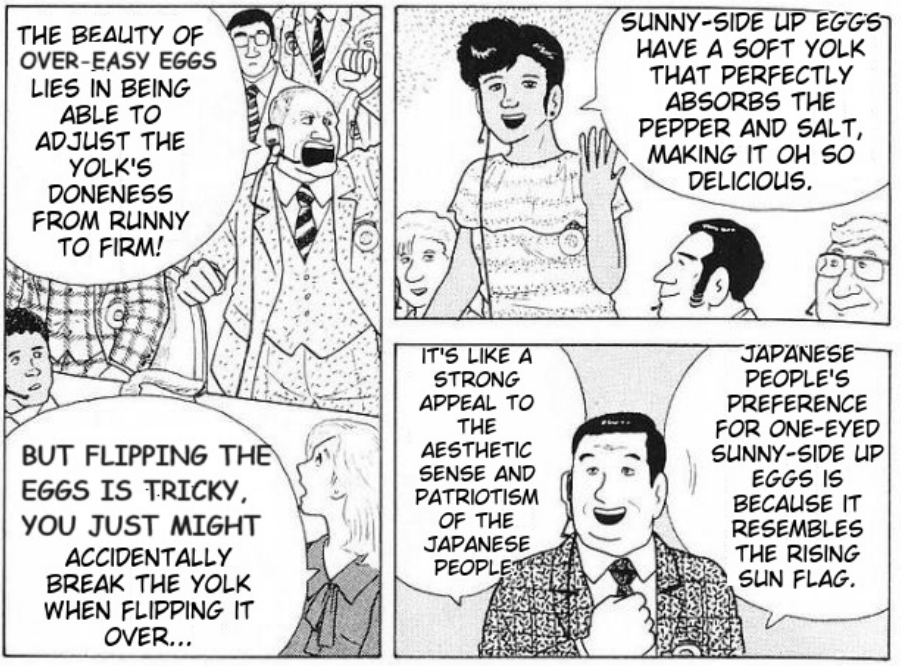
19

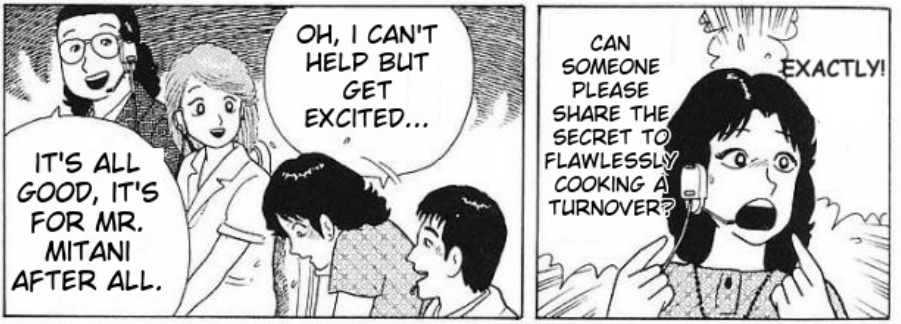
EVERYONE'S GOT THEIR OWN QUIRKS, HUH? IT'S LIKE A FUNNY LITTLE DANCE.

EXACTLY, NO HALF-HEARTED JOKES HERE, GOTTA TAKE IT SERIOUSLY.
EVERYONE IS JUST SO EARNEST.

I SKIP THE PLATE ALTOGETHER AND PLOP MY FRIED EGG STRAIGHT FROM THE PAN ONTO MY BREAD.
I LOVE IT WHEN MY FRIED EGG STAYS HOT ON THE PLATE, UNTOUCHED UNTIL I FINISH EATING – THAT'S WHEN IT'S AT ITS BEST!


THAT'S THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF IFEC. IF WE REACH A CONCLUSION, WE WON'T HAVE AN EXCUSE TO HOST THE NEXT EVENT, RIGHT?
OH, ARE WE NOT GONNA SETTLE ON THE BEST WAY TO EAT THIS?
WELL, LET'S WRAP UP THE DISCUSSION ON SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS FOR NOW...
NEXT, LET'S DEBATE WHETHER SUNNY-SIDE-UP OR OVER-EASY IS THE WAY TO GO.
WITH ALL THESE OPINIONS FLYING AROUND, IT'S GONNA BE A TOUGH ONE TO WRAP UP, MATE.
I SEE, IT'S TRULY A GAME FOR GROWN-UPS, ISN'T IT?
NOW, LET'S HAVE THE BLACK COMMITTEE REPORT ON THE ACTUAL SITUATION OF SUNNY-SIDE-UP AND OVER-EASY EGGS IN JAPAN.
IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL, IT MIGHT TURN INTO AN ALL-OUT BRAWL.
20
UNLIKE IN THE WEST WHERE TWO EGGS ARE THE NORM, IT SEEMS IN JAPAN, IT'S MOSTLY JUST ONE EGG, AKA SUNNY-SIDE-UP.
NOW, AFTER CONDUCTING RESEARCH ALL OVER JAPAN, IT SEEMS THAT WHEN IT COMES TO EGGS, SUNNY-SIDE-UP IS THE GO-TO, WHILE OVER-EASY EGGS ARE NOT VERY COMMON.
I AM THE PLEASURE-LOVING BLACK. PLEASE FAVOR ME...


THE BEAUTY OF OVER-EASY EGGS LIES IN BEING ABLE TO ADJUST THE YOLK'S DONENESS FROM RUNNY TO FIRM!
BUT FLIPPING THE EGGS IS TRICKY, YOU JUST MIGHT ACCIDENTALLY BREAK THE YOLK WHEN FLIPPING IT OVER...
SUNNY-SIDE UP EGGS HAVE A SOFT YOLK THAT PERFECTLY ABSORBS THE PEPPER AND SALT, MAKING IT OH SO DELICIOUS.
IT'S LIKE A STRONG APPEAL TO THE AESTHETIC SENSE AND PATRIOTISM OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE!
JAPANESE PEOPLE'S PREFERENCE FOR ONE-EYED SUNNY-SIDE UP EGGS IS BECAUSE IT RESEMBLES THE RISING SUN FLAG.


OH, I CAN'T HELP BUT GET EXCITED...
IT'S ALL GOOD, IT'S FOR MR. MITANI AFTER ALL.
CAN SOMEONE PLEASE SHARE THE SECRET TO FLAWLESSLY COOKING A TURNOVER?
EXACTLY!

カチ...
AS LONG AS THE SURFACE IS WHITE AND SOLIDIFIED, THIS COOKING METHOD WORKS JUST FINE.
IT'S BETTER TO SPEND MORE TIME ON THE SIDE AFTER FLIPPING IT THAN ON THE FIRST SIDE.
FRYING PANS ARE PRONE TO BURNING, SO THE KEY IS TO LET THE OIL SOAK IN WELL. THAT'S THE SECRET TO SUCCESS.

AND THEN, IMMEDIATELY COVER IT WITH A LID.
JUST AS IT'S ABOUT TO MELT, CRACK THE EGG AND ADD IT IN.
PUT SOME BUTTER ON THE FRYING PAN...
SEE, THIS WAY, YOU CAN SOLIDIFY THE SURFACE TO WHITE WITHOUT HAVING TO TURN IT OVER.
NOW, LET THE HEAT REMAIN VERY LOW LIKE THIS FOR A MINUTE OR SO...
I PROPOSE THAT FROM NOW ON, IN ADDITION TO SUNNY-SIDE UP AND OVER-EASY, WE ALSO INCLUDE THIS STEAMED FRIED EGG IN THE DEBATE!
THE WAY IT WAS JUST COOKED IS NEITHER SUNNY-SIDE UP NOR OVER-EASY! IT'S MORE LIKE STEAMED, YOU SEE.
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT IT BREAKING SINCE WE WON'T BE FLIPPING IT OVER...
ARE WE PUTTING A LID ON THE FRYING PAN?
22
WELL, WELL, IT SEEMS MR. YAMAOKA HAS ADDED A SPARK OF CONTROVERSY TO IFEC.
AGREED!
NO OBJECTIONS!
THE BIGGEST ADVANTAGE IS THAT YOU CAN PERFECTLY ADJUST THE FIRMNESS OF THE YOLK, YOU KNOW.

NO OBJECTIONS!!
LET'S EAT!!
OUR DISCUSSION IS SO LIVELY, I MUST'VE GOTTEN HUNGRY!
BEFORE WE DEBATE ON WHAT TO PUT ON THE SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS, LET'S ALL COOK AND EAT THEM TOGETHER.
THIS IS SUCH A FUN MEETING!
IT'S KINDA DEFLATING THAT WE'RE NOT REACHING ANY CONCLUSIONS THOUGH...
WHY NOT LET EACH OF US COME TO OUR OWN CONCLUSION LIKE COOKING OUR OWN SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGGS?
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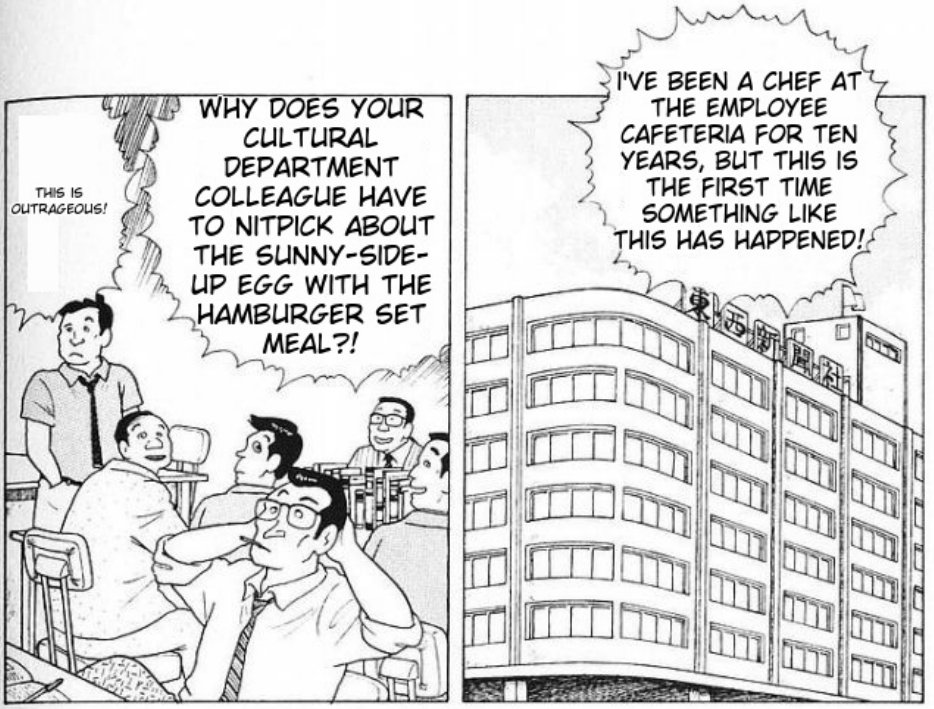
THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS!
WHY DOES YOUR CULTURAL DEPARTMENT COLLEAGUE HAVE TO NITPICK ABOUT THE SUNNY-SIDE-UP EGG WITH THE HAMBURGER SET MEAL?!
I'VE BEEN A CHEF AT THE EMPLOYEE CAFETERIA FOR TEN YEARS, BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME SOMETHING LIKE THIS HAS HAPPENED!
WELL, I APOLOGIZE FOR THAT, BUT IT'S ALL THANKS TO IFEC, ACTUALLY...
WHAT THE HELL IS IFEC?!
24
THE CHEF FROM THE EMPLOYEE CAFETERIA SEEMS TO BE JOINING THE IFEC.
OH MY, YOU WERE LISTENING SO INTENTLY...

第8話
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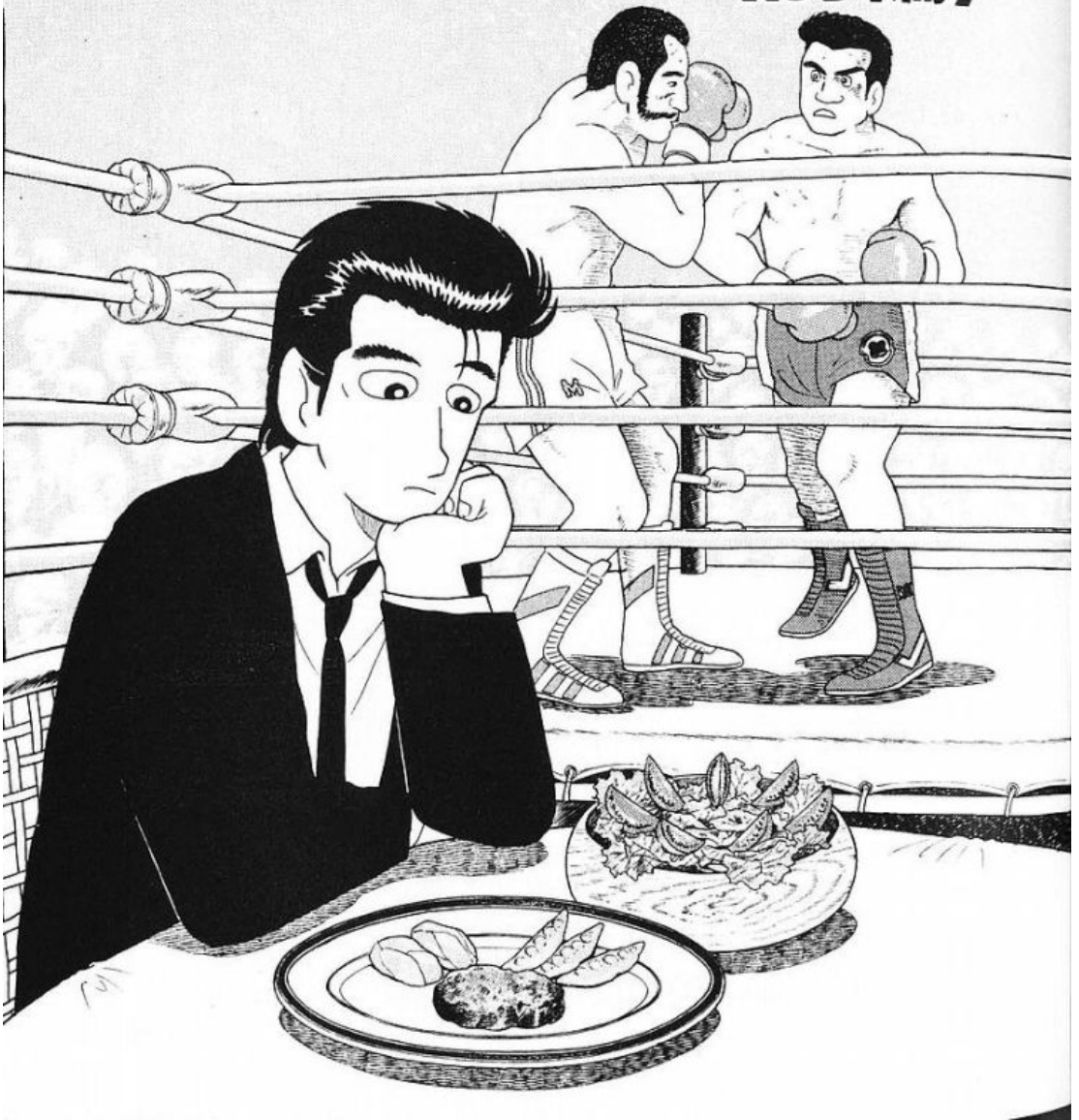
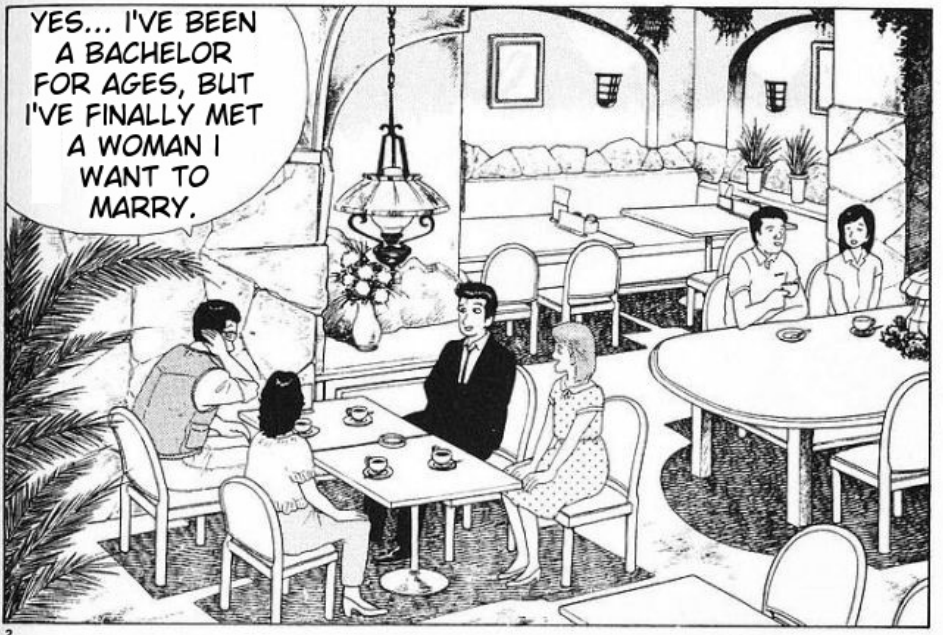
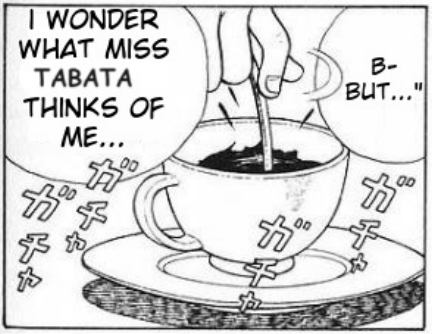
〈前編〉



COFFEE SHOP 珈琲館
COFFEE SHOP CAFE
WELL, ARAKAWA-SAN, YOU SEEM REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT MISS TABATA...


YES... I'VE BEEN A BACHELOR FOR AGES, BUT I'VE FINALLY MET A WOMAN I WANT TO MARRY.

2


I WONDER WHAT MISS TABATA THINKS OF ME...
B-BUT..."
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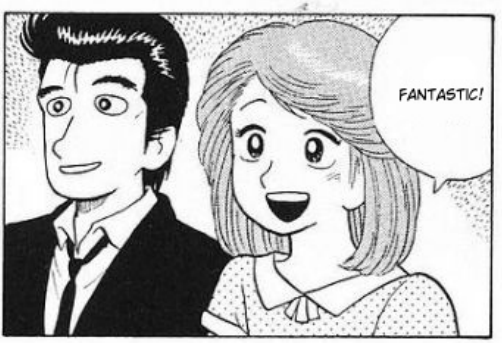
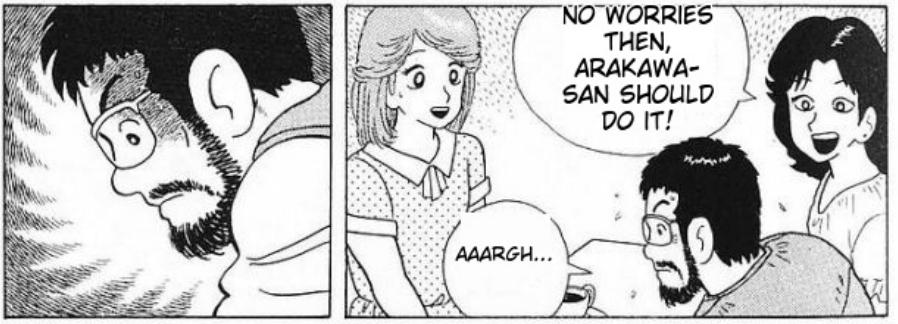

FANTASTIC!

IT SEEMS LIKE TABATA'S BEEN PROTECTING HER STATUS AS A SINGLE, CAREER DRIVEN WOMAN FOR YEARS...
WHEN IT COMES TO MARRIAGE, WELL...
JUDGING FROM THE WAY THINGS HAVE BEEN GOING, I BELIEVE THERE'S SOME AFFECTION THERE...
BUT...WHEN I THINK ABOUT BEING REJECTED, I JUST CAN'T MUSTER THE COURAGE...
NO, THAAAAAANK YOUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU!
WE COULD TRY TO CONFIRM TABATA-SAN'S FEELINGS, BUT LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS THAT STRAIGHTFORWARD, YOU KNOW?
PLEASE DON'T TEASE A MIDDLE-AGED MAN LIKE ME...
THAT INNOCENT BOYISH SIDE OF YOU, ARAKAWA-SAN, IS WHAT MAKES YOU SO WONDERFUL.
ARAKAWA-SAN, WHY NOT JUST BOLDLY MAKE YOUR MOVE, HUH?
I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BE SO SHY AND TIMID...I NEED TO SUMMON UP SOME COURAGE...
YOU NEED TO REALLY GET SOME KIND OF SPARK...
THAT'S WHAT WE NEED.

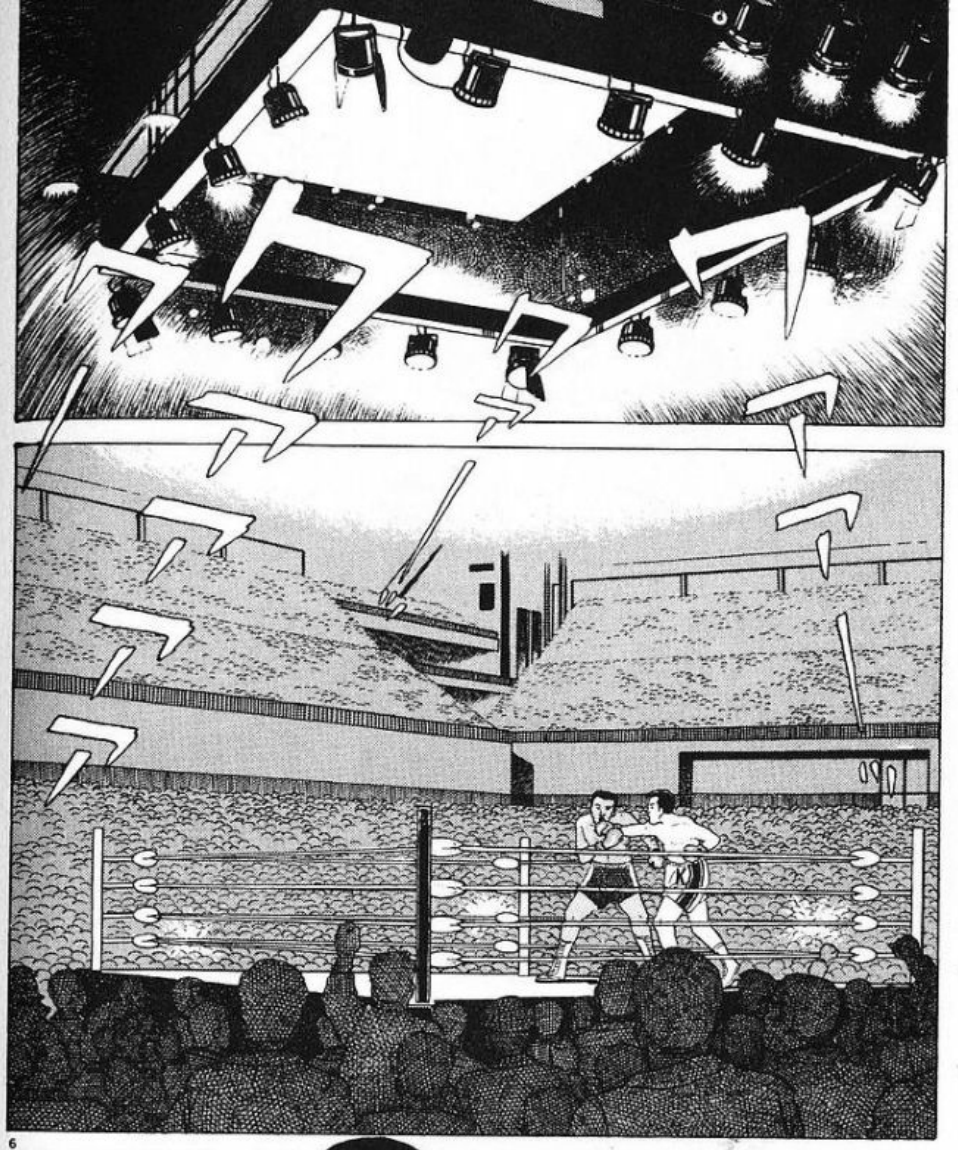
TABATA IS INTO SUMO AND BOXING, HUH?
I INVITED TABATA, AND SHE SAID SHE'D LOVE TO GO...
SOUNDS LIKE A TYPICAL EX-DELINQUINT, EH?
HEY ARAKAWA, YOU'RE GOING TO THAT BOXING MATCH WITH TABATA, RIGHT?
I'VE TAKEN SO MANY PHOTOS OF KAMIMURA BEFORE, I CAN'T MISS THIS ONE...
YES, I'M GOING TO WATCH KAMIMURA AND LEWIS' WORLD TITLE FIGHT.
HOW ABOUT THIS, ARAKAWA-SAN? IF KAMIMURA WINS, YOU PROPOSE TO TABATA RIGHT THEN AND THERE.
OOPS...
WHAT WAS THAT?
4
ARAKAWA, YOU NEED A LITTLE PUSH, A SILLY LITTLE THING LIKE THIS CAN WORK WONDERS AS A CATALYST.
THAT'S THE TRIGGER, THE SPARK.
ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THAT?
HUH?!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
Y-YES, IF HE LOSES, HE'S FINISHED.
B-BUT WHAT IF KATSUMURA LOSES?!
BUT IF IT DOESN'T WORK, IT MIGHT BE THE END OF THE LINE FOR HIM...

LEWIS, THE OPPONENT THIS TIME, IS JUST A RISING PLAYER WHO RECENTLY ENTERED THE RANKINGS. IT'S GONNA BE A PIECE OF CAKE FOR KATSUMURA.
CHAMPION KATSUMURA YUKIO.
KATSUMURA IS THE UNIFIED CHAMPION OF THE WBC AND WBA FEATHERWEIGHT DIVISIONS, HAVING DEFENDED HIS TITLE TEN TIMES IN A ROW.
日本武道館 ・午後


NO WORRIES THEN, ARAKAWA-SAN SHOULD DO IT!
AAARGH...

IF KATSUMURA WINS, I'LL PROPOSE TO TABATA-SAN RIGHT ON THE SPOT!
GOT IT, I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT!

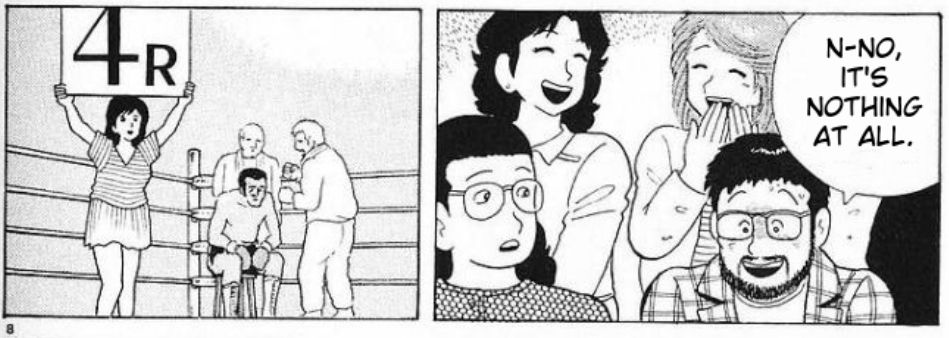


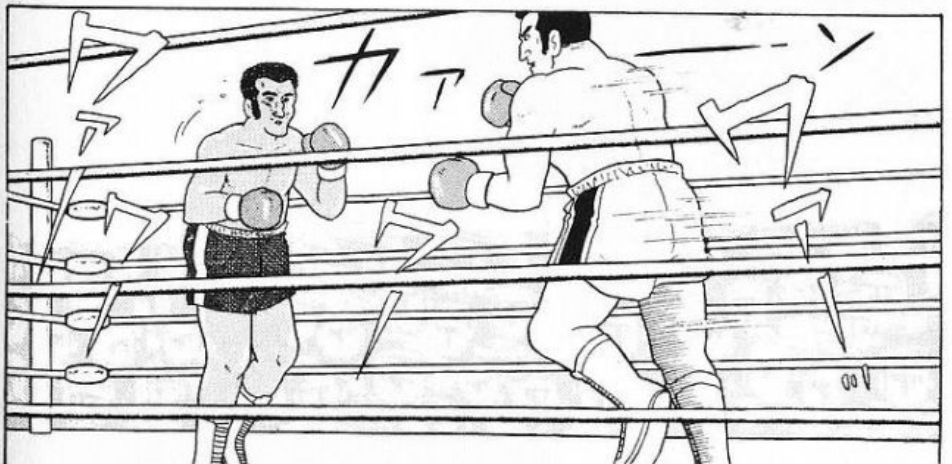
6

KATSUMURA, GO FOR IT! TAKE THEM DOWN IN ONE SWIFT MOVE!
WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE KATSUMURA LOSE, NOT ON MY WATCH!
OH, TABATA-SAN, YOU NEVER CHANGE...

LEWIS IS DEFINITELY GETTING KNOCKED OUT IN THE NEXT ROUND!
LOOKS LIKE KATSUMURA'S VICTORY IS IN THE BAG.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH ARAKAWA?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
W-WELL, YEAH...
HANG IN THERE, ARAKAWA.
ARAKAWA, IT'S SHOWTIME!


4R
N-NO, IT'S NOTHING AT ALL.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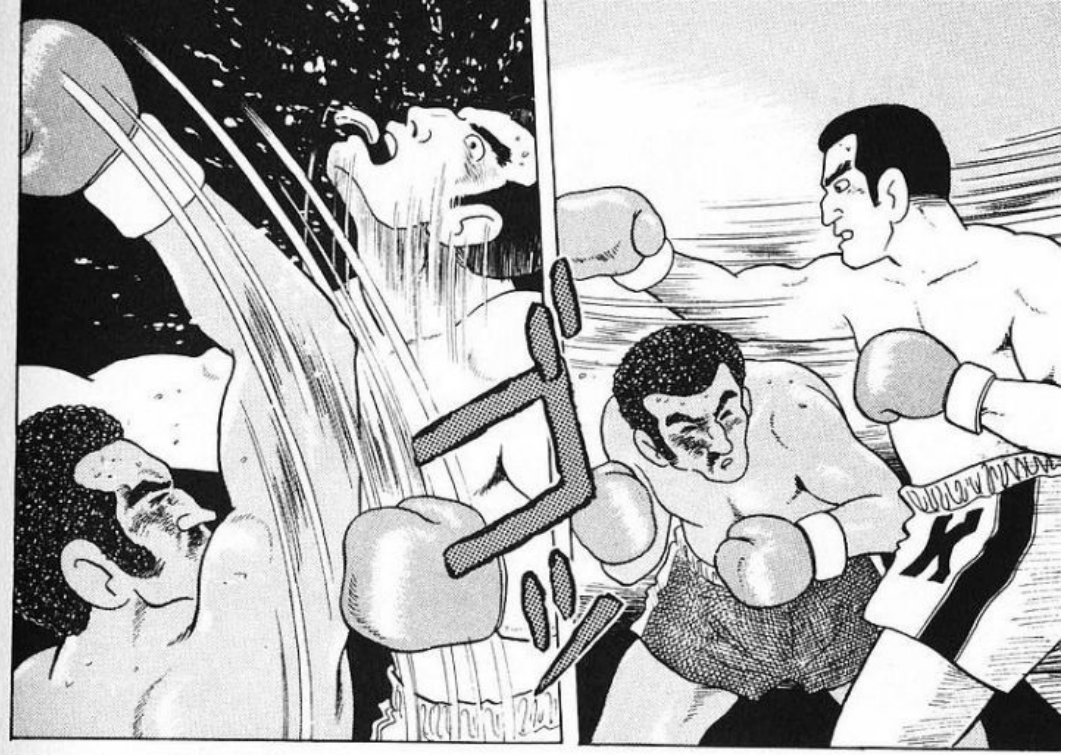
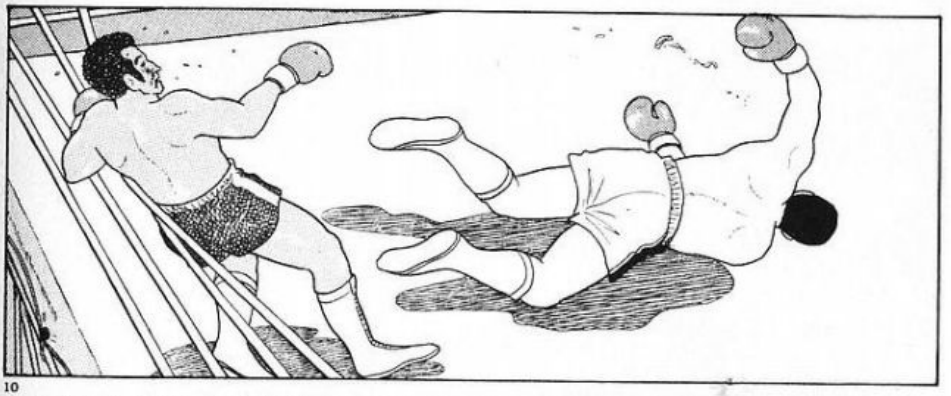
IT'S ALL COMING TOGETHER NOW!
バッド
KNOCK LEWIS OUT WITH ONE SHOT!
HE'S GOING TO DO IT!
YES.
IT'S SETTLED, YES!
FINISH HIM OFF!





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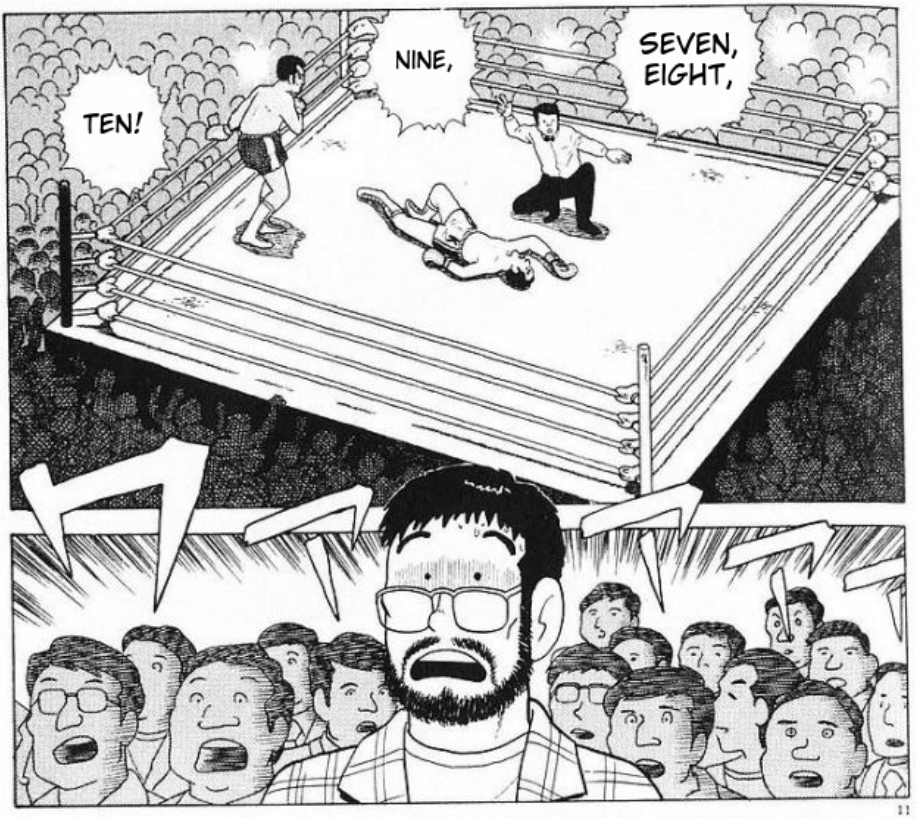

TEN!
NINE,
SEVEN,
EIGHT,

11

I THOUGHT KATSUMURA HAD IT IN THE BAG...!!
...
BOXING IS SO SCARY SOMETIMES...

.....

WITH THIS, JAPAN IS LEFT WITHOUT A SINGLE CHAMPION! HOW UTTERLY UNEXCITING!
THIS IS A REAL BUMMER!

I GET IT, IT'S FRUSTRATING THAT KATSURAMURA LOST, BUT...
CHEER UP, ARAKAWA! DON'T BE SO DOWN.

ギョッ
HUH? WAIT A SEC... ARAKAWA-SAN, WERE YOU BETTING ON KATSUMURA?

EH, UMM...

12

I KNEW IT! I HAD A FEELING!
Y-YES, THAT'S RIGHT!

NO...I... IT WASN'T THAT KIND OF BET...
YOU NAUGHTY PERSON! IT'S ILLEGAL TO BET MONEY ON BOXING, YOU KNOW!

I'M GONNA CHEER FOR SAZAYA! HE'S GOTTA WIN, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.
ALRIGHT!
WELL, IT CAN'T BE HELPED. CRAZY THINGS HAPPEN IN BOXING.
YAMAOKA-SAN, YOU SAID KATSUMURA WOULD DEFINITELY WIN!!!

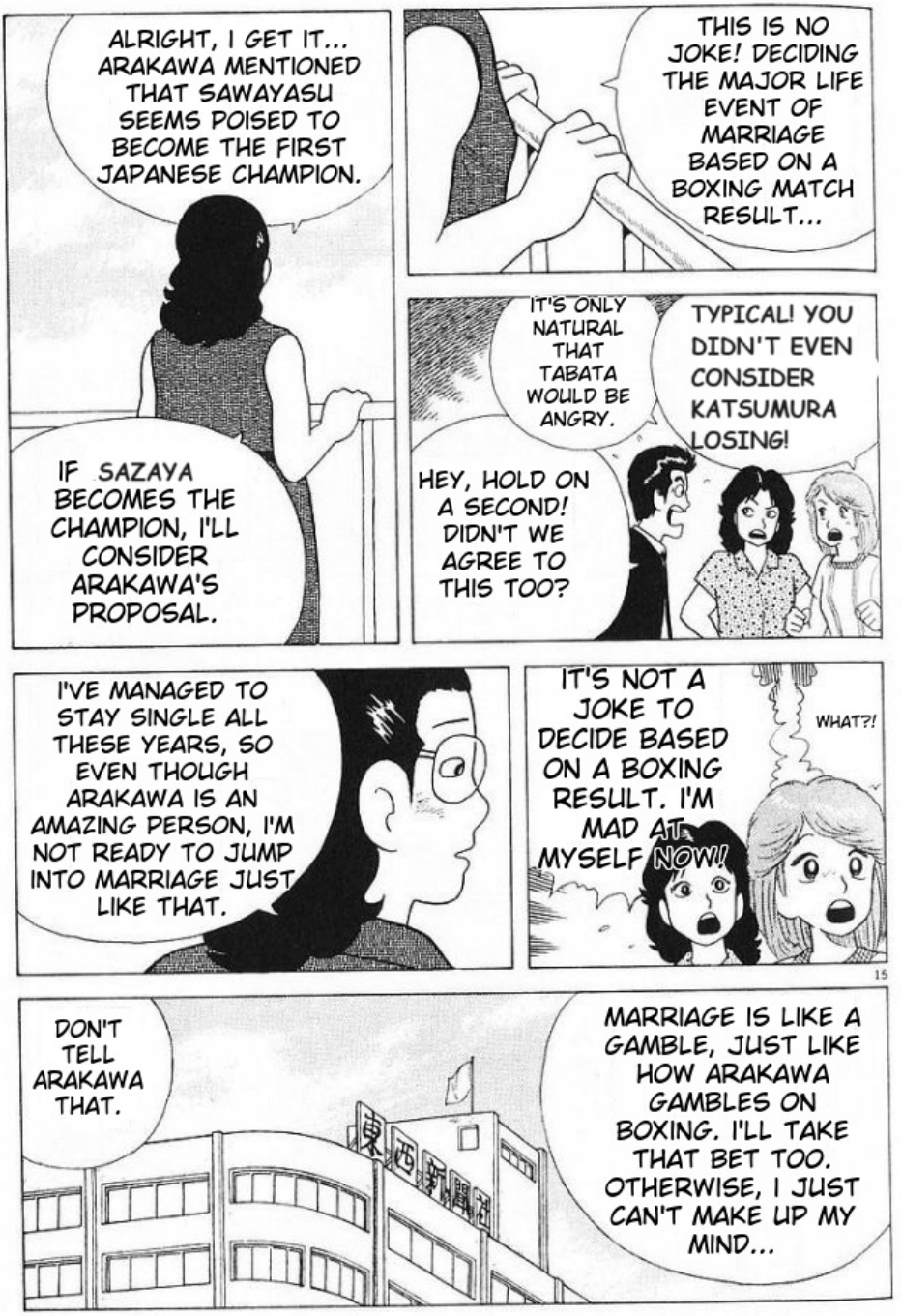
WELL, THERE IS SOMEONE BUT...
AKAWA-SAN, ARE THERE ANY PROMISING FIGHTERS? ANYONE WHO COULD BECOME A CHAMPION?

SAZAYA IS AIMING TO CHALLENGE FOR THE WORLD LIGHTWEIGHT TITLE NEXT TIME.

13

WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT...
EITHER WAY, WE'VE LOST THE OPPORTUNITY.

DOES ARAKAWA REALLY FEEL THE SAME ABOUT ME?
SO, THAT MEANS IT'S A YES!!
I'M SO HAPPY...
ARAKAWA IS SUCH AN AMAZING PERSON. TO THINK THAT ARAKAWA HAD THOSE KINDS OF THOUGHTS ABOUT ME...
WELL, IT'S MY FAULT. I PUSHED HIM TO MAKE A MOVE. I NEVER THOUGHT KATSUMURA WOULD LOSE...
SAYING HE'D CONFESS TO ME IF KATSUMURA WON, BUT WOULDN'T IF HE LOST...
ARAKAWA IS SO WISHY-WASHY, THOUGH.


ALRIGHT, I GET IT... ARAKAWA MENTIONED THAT SAWAYASU SEEMS POISED TO BECOME THE FIRST JAPANESE CHAMPION.
IF SAZAYA BECOMES THE CHAMPION, I'LL CONSIDER ARAKAWA'S PROPOSAL.
THIS IS NO JOKE! DECIDING THE MAJOR LIFE EVENT OF MARRIAGE BASED ON A BOXING MATCH RESULT...
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT TABATA WOULD BE ANGRY.
TYPICAL! YOU DIDN'T EVEN CONSIDER KATSUMURA LOSING!
HEY, HOLD ON A SECOND! DIDN'T WE AGREE TO THIS TOO?
I'VE MANAGED TO STAY SINGLE ALL THESE YEARS, SO EVEN THOUGH ARAKAWA IS AN AMAZING PERSON, I'M NOT READY TO JUMP INTO MARRIAGE JUST LIKE THAT.
IT'S NOT A JOKE TO DECIDE BASED ON A BOXING RESULT. I'M MAD AT MYSELF NOW!
WHAT?!
15
DON'T TELL ARAKAWA THAT.
MARRIAGE IS LIKE A GAMBLE, JUST LIKE HOW ARAKAWA GAMBLES ON BOXING. I'LL TAKE THAT BET TOO. OTHERWISE, I JUST CAN'T MAKE UP MY MIND...

WELL, I'VE BEEN SINGLE FOR A LONG TIME, YOU KNOW.
MAKING UP YOUR MIND IS A TOUGH THING TO DO.
WAIT, IF SAZAYA BECOMES THE CHAMPION, SHE'LL MARRY ME?!
IT'S JUST LIKE ARAKAWA, YOU NEED SOME KIND OF TRIGGER.
I'M HEADING TO THE GYM NOW TO WATCH PRACTICE AND CHEER THEM ON!
I'VE ACTUALLY TAKEN SOME PHOTOS OF SAZAYA FOR A WHILE NOW, SO WE'RE PRETTY CLOSE.
GOT IT, I'M ENTRUSTING ALL MY HOPES TO SAZAYA!!!
16
WHEN IT COMES TO THE PLAYERS WHO WILL DETERMINE THE FATE OF ARAKAWA AND TABATA, I'VE GOT TO MEET THEM TOO!
OH, A GYM, HUH? MAYBE I SHOULD GO TOO.
ME TOO!

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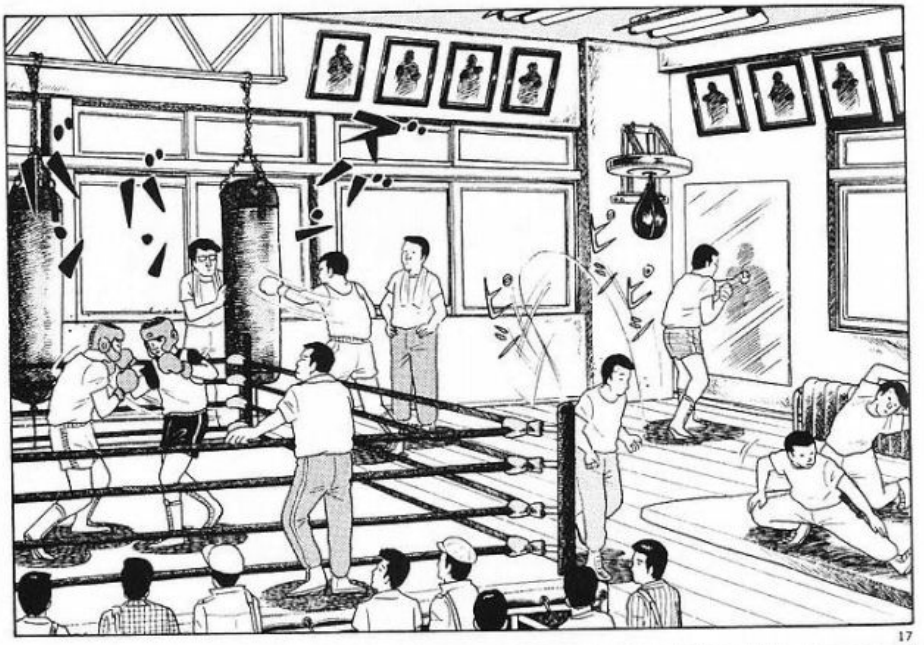

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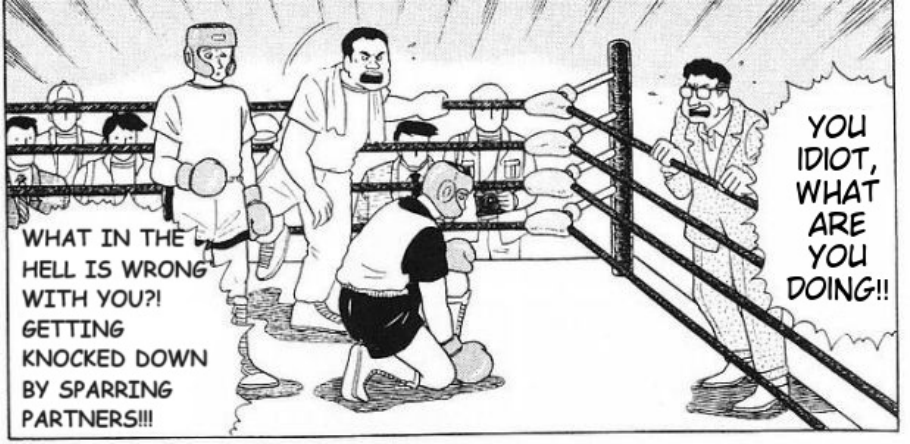

WHAT IN THE HELL IS WRONG WITH YOU?! GETTING KNOCKED DOWN BY SPARRING PARTNERS!!!
YOU IDIOT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING!!

SORRY ABOUT THIS.

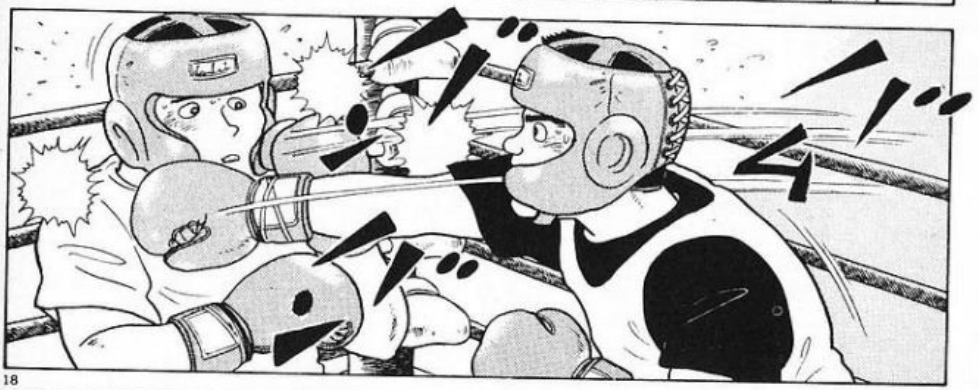
WITH THIS KIND OF PERFORMANCE, ARE YOU SURE YOU'LL BE OKAY FOR THE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP IN JUST A MONTH?
HEY, WHAT'S GOING ON WITH SAZAYA? HE'S WAY OFF HIS GAME.

THAT'S IT FOR TODAY, KID. GO ON, HIT THE SHOWERS!

21

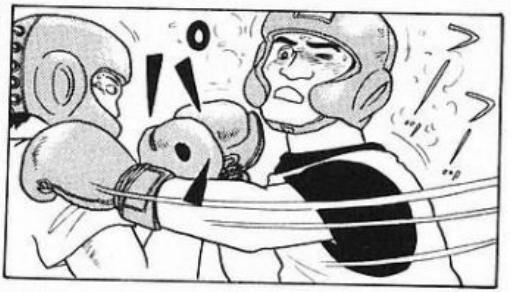
IS SOMETHING WRONG?
YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE DOING WELL, WHAT'S UP?

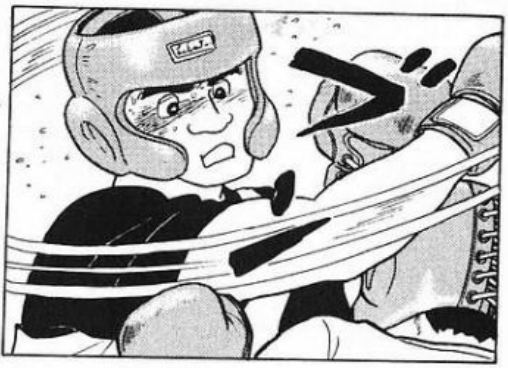
WHAT ARE YOU DILLY-DALLYING FOR?!
YOU NEED TO STEP INTO IT MORE!



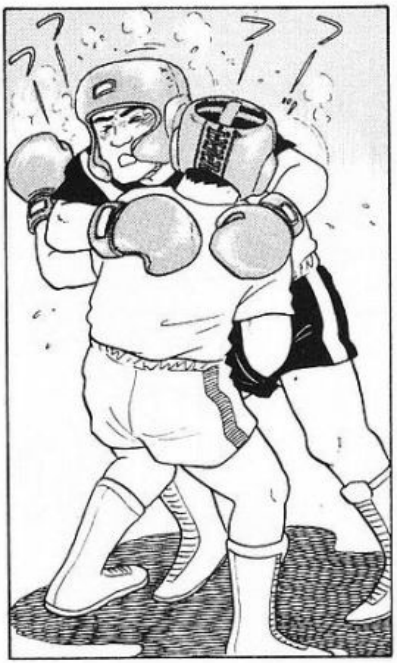
18

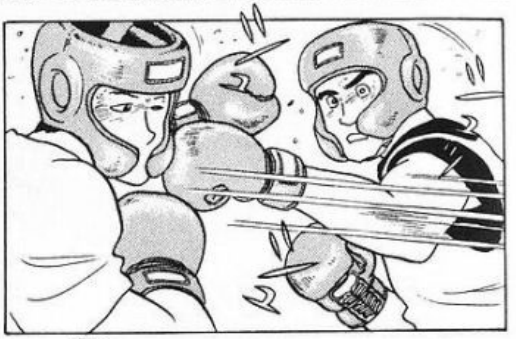
YOUR SWINGS ARE TOO WILD, TIGHTEN UP THAT STANCE!

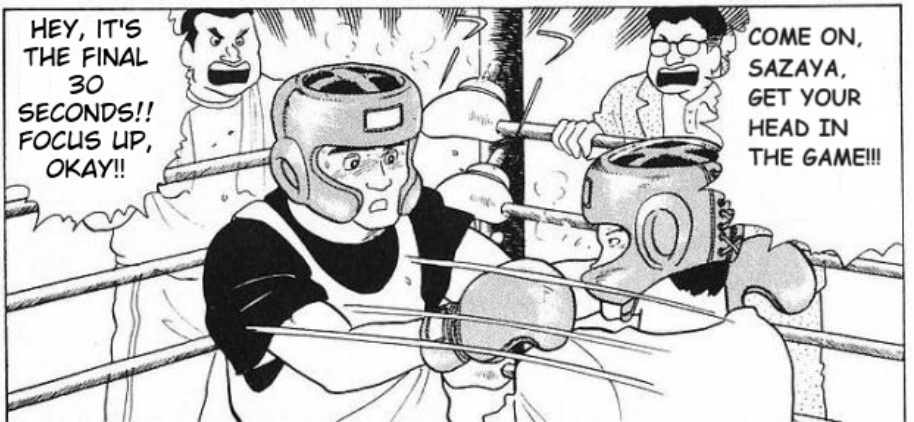




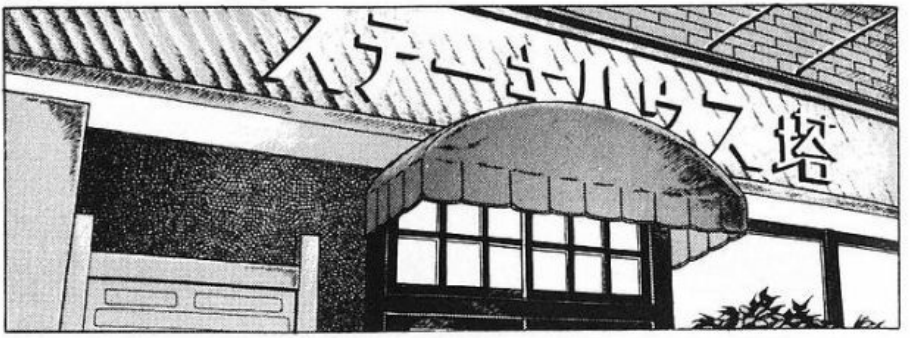
FEELS LIKE YOUR MOVES ARE SLUGGISH TODAY.
SEEMS LIKE SAZAYA ISN'T IN HIGH SPIRITS, HUHh...






HEY, IT'S THE FINAL 30 SECONDS!! FOCUS UP, OKAY!!
COME ON, SAZAYA, GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME!!!

BEING MY FIRST SHOT AT THE WORLD TITLE, I GUESS THE PRESSURE'S REALLY GETTING TO ME MENTALLY...
I'M AT MY WIT'S END AS A TRAINER, YOU KNOW? IT'S A REAL PICKLE.
HMM, THIS IS TOUGH...
WHAT'S GOING ON WITH SAZAYA? THIS IS NOT GOOD AT ALL, YOU KNOW.
HUH?
WELL, AT THIS RATE, MR. ARAKAWA WILL NEVER GET HITCHED!
WELL, THIS IS A PICKLE, ISN'T IT?
IN TERMS OF RAW POWER, SAZAYA CAN EASILY BEAT LEWIS, BUT HIS HEAD JUST ISN'T IN IT...
BUT DON'T FORGET, HE'S STILL ON A DIET, OKAY?
NAH, IT'S NOTHING, REALLY. BUT HEY, CAN I ASK SAZAYA OUT FOR DINNER TONIGHT?
22
I UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY.
MAYBE IT'LL HELP HIM GET HIS HEAD IN THE FIGHT...

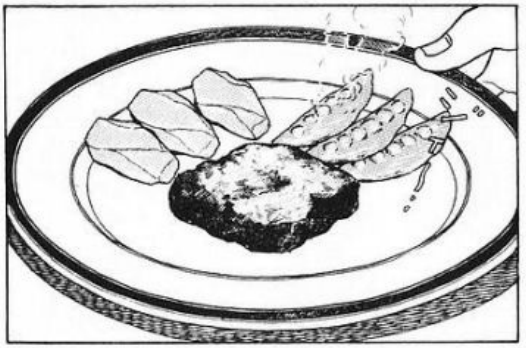


SO, IT'S GETTING TOUGH TO KEEP THE SAME WEIGHT AS BEFORE.
I GUESS YOU'RE AROUND 22? SO YOUR BODY IS STILL GROWING IN SOME WAYS...

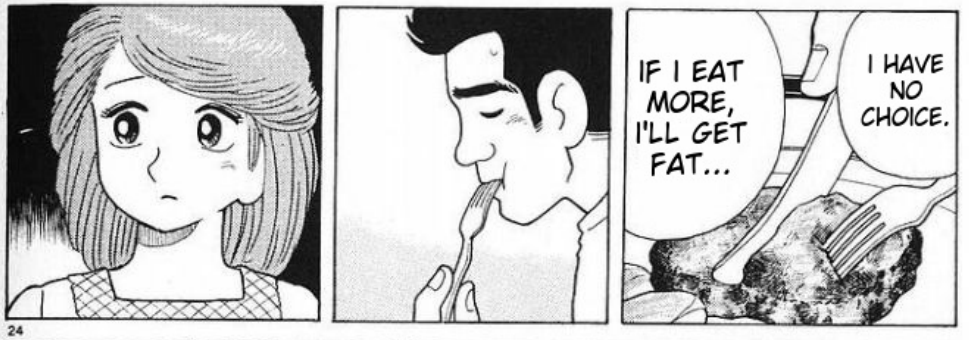
YEAH... IT'S REALLY TOUGH.

I DIDN'T THINK LOSING WEIGHT WAS THIS HARD BEFORE...

23



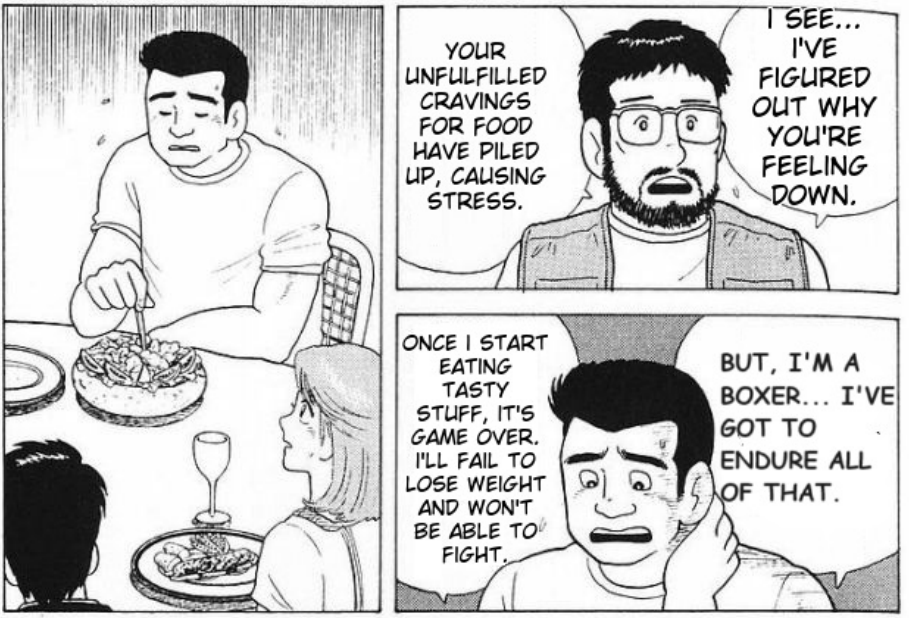
THAT'S SUCH A SMALL CUT OF MEAT! AND THERE'S BARELY ANY FAT ON IT!
THAT'S SUCH A TINY PORTION...


IF I EAT MORE, I'LL GET FAT...
I HAVE NO CHOICE.

24

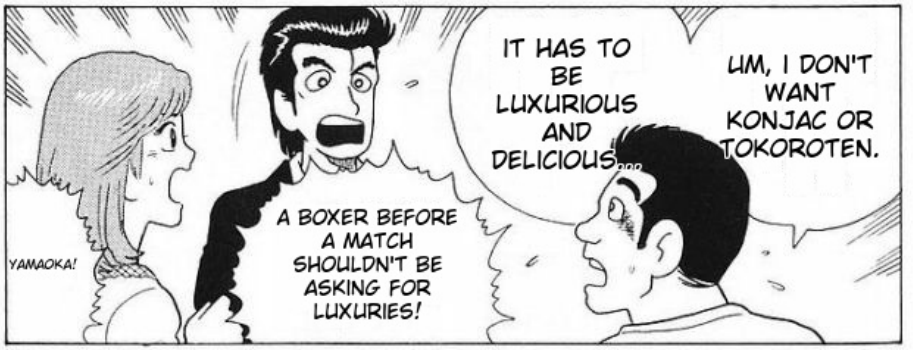
I KNOW, BUT SERIOUSLY, I'M FED UP. I WANT TO EAT SOMETHING DELICIOUS...
BUT VEGGIES ARE GOOD TOO!
AS A BOXER AIMING TO BECOME A WORLD CHAMPION, IT'S EMBARRASSING, BUT I'M A FOODIE. I CAN'T PERFORM WELL IF I CAN ONLY EAT BAD STUFF...

I DON'T EVEN WANT TO LOOK AT VEGETABLES.
UGH... I'M SO SICK OF IT, JUST A LITTLE BIT OF MEAT AND VEGETABLE SALAD EVERY DAY, IT'S STARTING TO GET TO ME, YOU KNOW?


YOUR UNFULFILLED CRAVINGS FOR FOOD HAVE PILED UP, CAUSING STRESS.
I SEE... I'VE FIGURED OUT WHY YOU'RE FEELING DOWN.
ONCE I START EATING TASTY STUFF, IT'S GAME OVER. I'LL FAIL TO LOSE WEIGHT AND WON'T BE ABLE TO FIGHT.
BUT, I'M A BOXER... I'VE GOT TO ENDURE ALL OF THAT.

...!
HUH, ME?
COME UP WITH DELICIOUS FOOD THAT WON'T MAKE HIM FAT.
YAMAOKA, YOU GOTTA DO SOMETHING!

25


YAMAOKA!
A BOXER BEFORE A MATCH SHOULDN'T BE ASKING FOR LUXURIES!
IT HAS TO BE LUXURIOUS AND DELICIOUS...
UM, I DON'T WANT KONJAC OR TOKOROTEN.

THAT'S RIGHT, ALWAYS ACTING ALL HIGH AND MIGHTY, COME UP WITH SOMETHING!
IF SAZAYA-SAN LOSES, ARAKAWA-SAN AND TABATA-SAN CAN'T GET MARRIED!
SO, IT HAS TO BE LAVISH, LUXURIOUS, AND DELICIOUS?
AND YOU WANT ME TO COME UP WITH LOW-CALORIE DISHES?
YAMAOKA-SAN, PLEASE HELP US OUT!
HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO DO THAT?!

第8話
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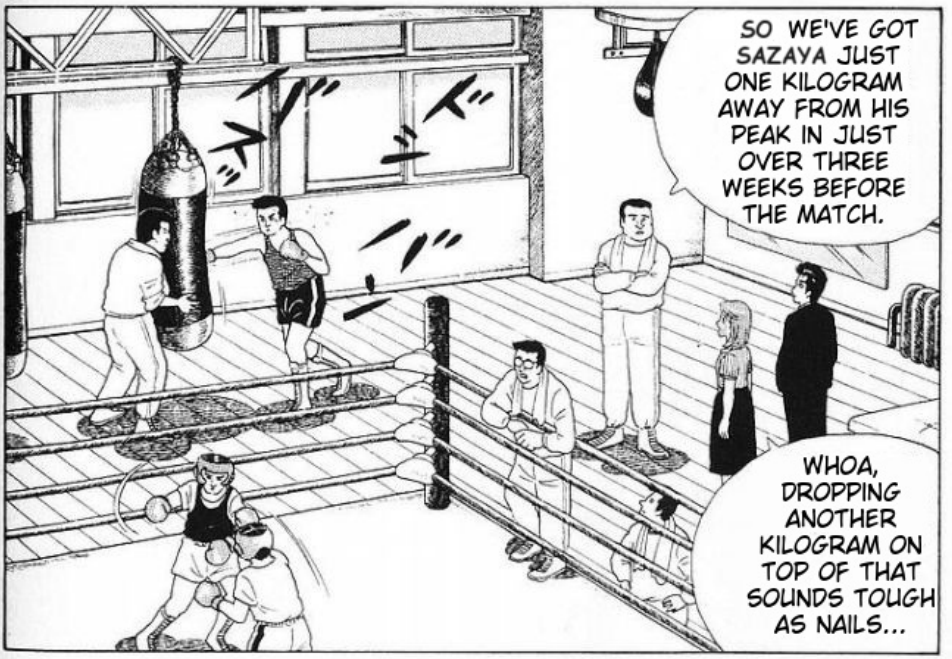
〈後編〉

AKEBONO
BOXING
CLUB
部楽倶闘

2

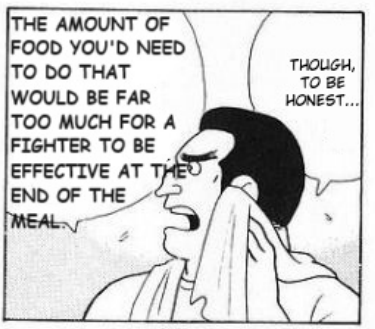

SO WE'VE GOT SAZAYA JUST ONE KILOGRAM AWAY FROM HIS PEAK IN JUST OVER THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE MATCH.
WHOA, DROPPING ANOTHER KILOGRAM ON TOP OF THAT SOUNDS TOUGH AS NAILS...

おいFOODIE.

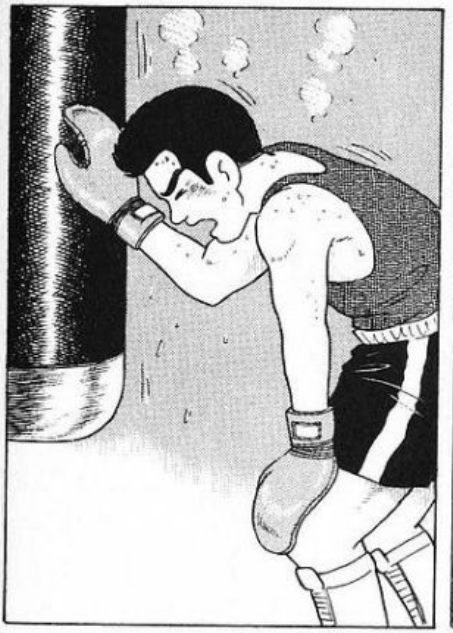
SO, WHAT KIND OF FOOD IS ALLOWED FOR SAZAYA AT THIS TIME OF YEAR?
WELL, FOR BOXERS, IT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS THAT.
IT'S NOT GOOD TO CONSUME TOO MUCH FAT, BUT IT'S GOTTA TASTE GOOD, RIGHT?
DELICIOUS FOOD USUALLY TENDS TO BE RICH AND FATTY...
AS LONG AS THE TOTAL CALORIES CONSUMED DAILY DON'T EXCEED THE CALORIES BURNED DURING TRAINING, YOU CAN EAT ANYTHING AS LONG AS IT'S BALANCED.
WELL, YOU HAVE TO WATCH YOUR SUGAR AND FAT INTAKE.
3
BUT THAT'S JUST THE PRESSURE FROM CHALLENGING FOR A WORLD TITLE FOR THE FIRST TIME...
YOU DON'T NEED TO BE TOO PICKY ABOUT FOOD. FOOD IS FUEL. JUST EAT WHAT YOU'RE GIVEN AND BE GRATEFUL.

SO, IF WE COULD JUST ALLEVIATE THAT FRUSTRATION, MAYBE THE ANXIETY WOULD DISAPPEAR TOO...
IF THE ANXIETY FROM FEELING PRESSURED IS HUGE, WOULDN'T THAT ALSO LEAD TO A BUILDUP OF FRUSTRATION?

WE NEED TO COME UP WITH SOMETHING QUICKLY, A LAVISH FEAST THAT'S DELICIOUS AND EXTRAVAGANT, YET WON'T MAKE HIM FAT.

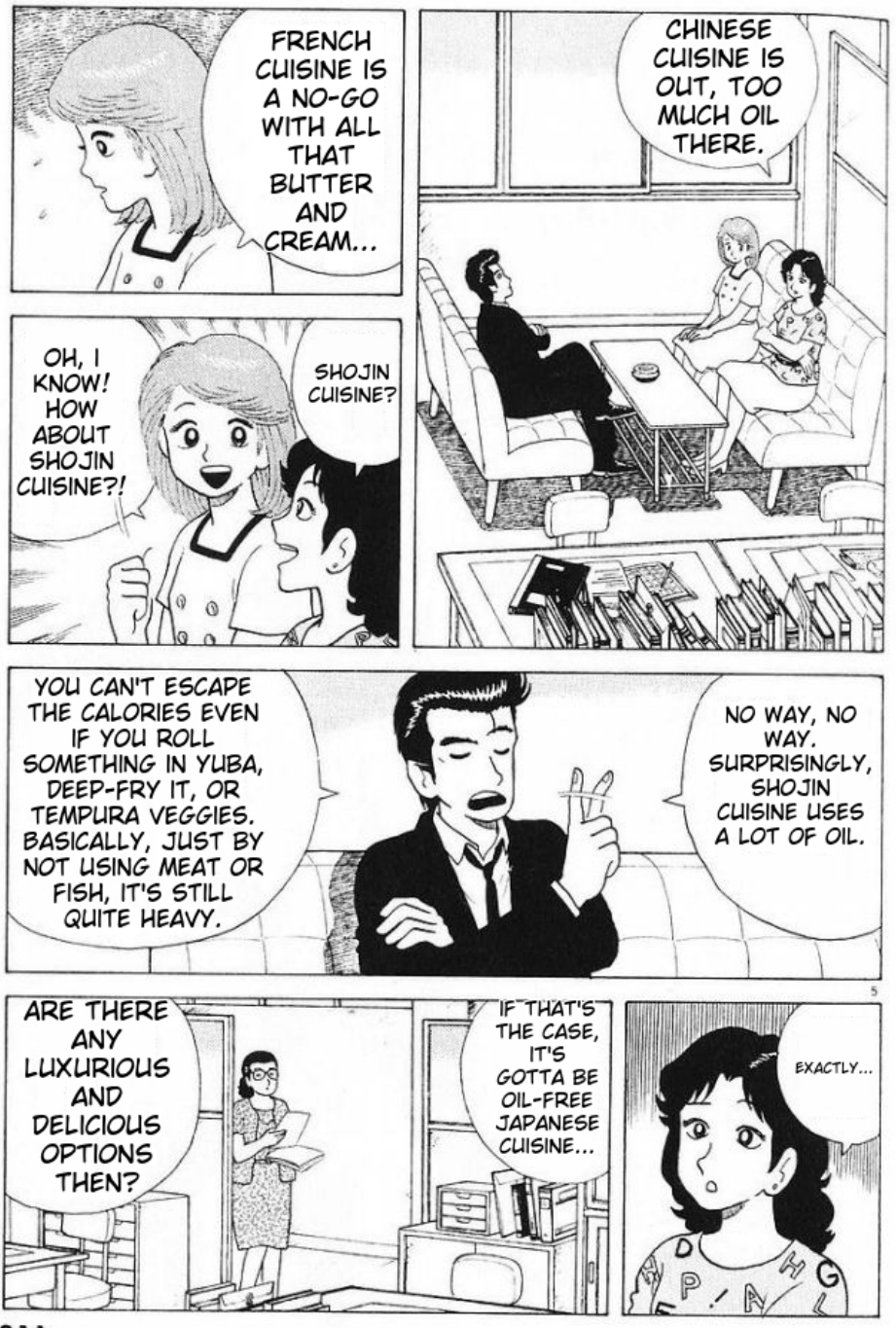

THE AMOUNT OF FOOD YOU'D NEED TO DO THAT WOULD BE FAR TOO MUCH FOR A FIGHTER TO BE EFFECTIVE AT THE END OF THE MEAL.
THOUGH, TO BE HONEST...

4



I CAN IMAGINE LUXURIOUS, EXTRAVAGANT, AND DELICIOUS DISHES. BUT AT THE SAME TIME, HE CAN'T AFFORD TO GAIN WEIGHT.
HOW ON EARTH ARE WE SUPPOSED TO CREATE SUCH A THING?

BUT WE'VE GOT TO FIGURE SOMETHING OUT! TABATA AND ARAKAWA ARE DEPENDING ON US!


FRENCH CUISINE IS A NO-GO WITH ALL THAT BUTTER AND CREAM...
CHINESE CUISINE IS OUT, TOO MUCH OIL THERE.
OH, I KNOW! HOW ABOUT SHOJIN CUISINE?!
SHOJIN CUISINE?
YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THE CALORIES EVEN IF YOU ROLL SOMETHING IN YUBA, DEEP-FRY IT, OR TEMPURA VEGGIES. BASICALLY, JUST BY NOT USING MEAT OR FISH, IT'S STILL QUITE HEAVY.
NO WAY, NO WAY. SURPRISINGLY, SHOJIN CUISINE USES A LOT OF OIL.
5
ARE THERE ANY LUXURIOUS AND DELICIOUS OPTIONS THEN?
IF THAT'S THE CASE, IT'S GOTTA BE OIL-FREE JAPANESE CUISINE...
EXACTLY...

DON'T YOU CARE IF TABATA AND ARAKAWA FIND HAPPINESS?!
WHY THE SUDDEN HESITATION?
UGH, THIS IS SUCH A HASSLE. LET'S JUST LEAVE THOSE TWO ALONE.

UM, WELL...
ガタッ

ESPECIALLY THAT STUBBORN OLD MAID.
JUST 'CAUSE YOU TIE THE KNOT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE GUARANTEED HAPPINESS, RIGHT?

WHEN YOU GOSSIP, KEEP IT DOWN A NOTCH, WILL YA?

6

WHERE TO NOW?
LET'S GO ALREADY!
ENOUGH CHITCHAT, LET'S GET MOVING!

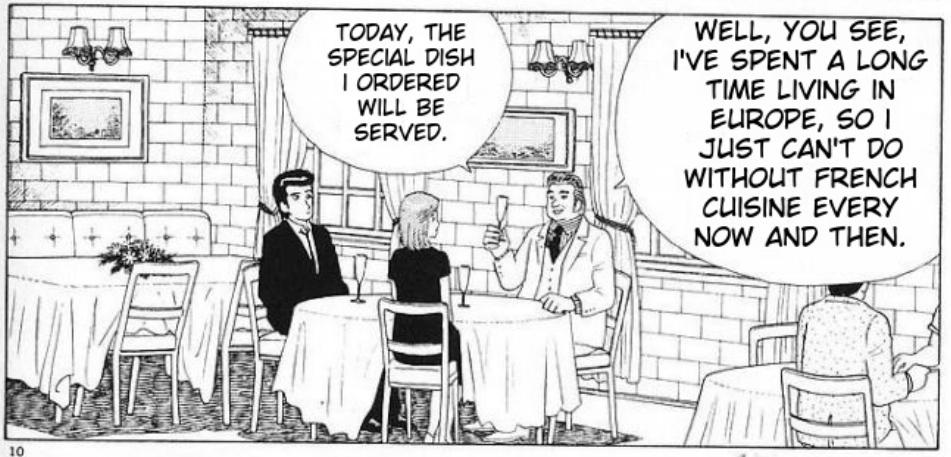
WELL,
IN THAT CASE, IT WOULD BE COMBINING VEGETABLES WITH SEAFOOD WITHOUT OIL CONTENT.
岡星
WOW! THE RED OF THE SHRIMP, THE YELLOW OF THE TOFU SKIN, AND THE GREEN OF THE WHEAT GLUTEN MAKE SUCH A BEAUTIFUL COMBINATION!
IT'S A DISH OF WHEAT GLUTEN, SHRIMP, AND TOFU SKIN STEWED TOGETHER.
HOW ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS?
7
NEXT UP IS SIMMERED EGGPLANT.
DELICIOUS AND REFRESHING!

VINEGAR AND SHELLFISH SHOULD BE GOOD FOR THE BODY, RIGHT?
THE COMBO OF VEGGIES AND SHELLFISH IS JUST INDESCRIBABLY GOOD, ISN'T IT?
THIS HERE IS A DISH OF CUCUMBERS, CARROTS, UDO, ABALONE, AND ARK SHELL IN VINEGAR. THEY CALL IT 'ACHARA AE.'
MMM... IT'S DELICIOUS AND LOOKS SO BEAUTIFUL... AS EXPECTED.
YAMAOKA, WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY? WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
BUT... I CAN'T HELP FEELING LIKE IT'S NOT QUITE FITTING FOR SAZAYA.
IT'S JUST A GUT FEELING.
I CAN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON IT...

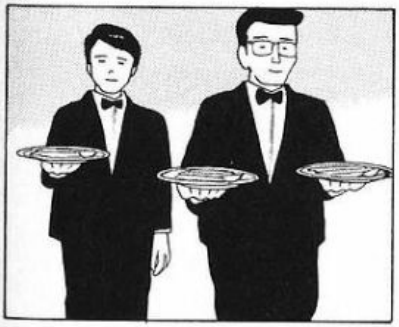
8

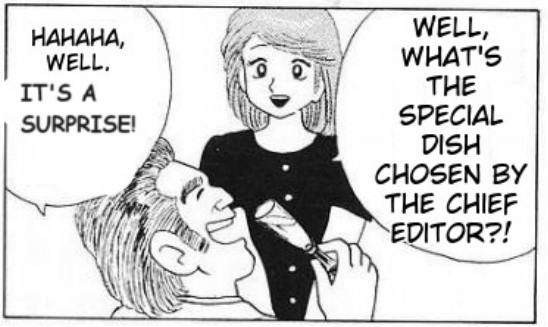
TODAY, I GOT SCOLDED BY CHIEF EDITOR KOIZUMI FOR NOT MAKING MUCH PROGRESS ON CREATING THE 'ULTIMATE MENU'.
BUT THEN, AFTER THAT, THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF SAID HE WOULD TREAT US AND TOOK US TO ROPPONGI.
SERIOUSLY... I NEED YOU TO SHOW SOME RESULTS, YOU KNOW...
YOU CAN'T BE SO LAID-BACK.
I'M SORRY.
9
HMM.
WELL, I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOMETHING DELICIOUS TODAY TO LIFT YOUR SPIRITS, SO CHEER UP AND KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.
WELL, THANK YOU...

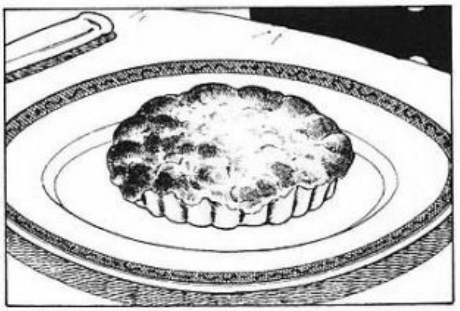
Restaurant マックロウ

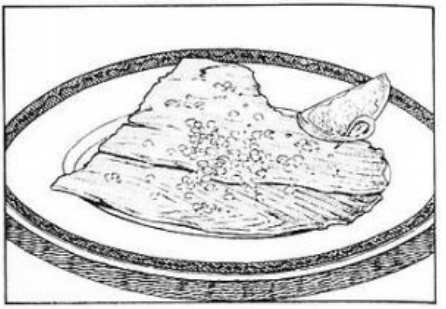

TODAY, THE SPECIAL DISH I ORDERED WILL BE SERVED.
WELL, YOU SEE, I'VE SPENT A LONG TIME LIVING IN EUROPE, SO I JUST CAN'T DO WITHOUT FRENCH CUISINE EVERY NOW AND THEN.

10

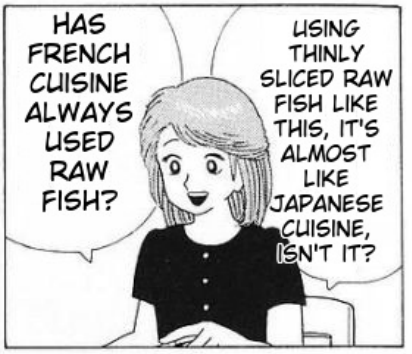



HAHAHA, WELL. IT'S A SURPRISE!
WELL, WHAT'S THE SPECIAL DISH CHOSEN BY THE CHIEF EDITOR?!





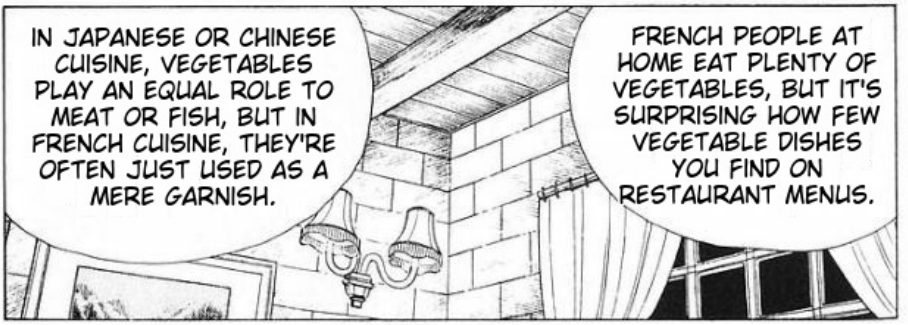
WELL, I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S THE INFLUENCE OF JAPANESE CUISINE OR SOMETHING ELSE, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE THEY'RE STARTING TO FOCUS MORE ON BRINGING OUT THE NATURAL FLAVORS OF THE INGREDIENTS WITHOUT OVERCOMPLICATING THINGS.
JUST THE PAST DECADE OR SO.


HAS FRENCH CUISINE ALWAYS USED RAW FISH?
USING THINLY SLICED RAW FISH LIKE THIS, IT'S ALMOST LIKE JAPANESE CUISINE, ISN'T IT?

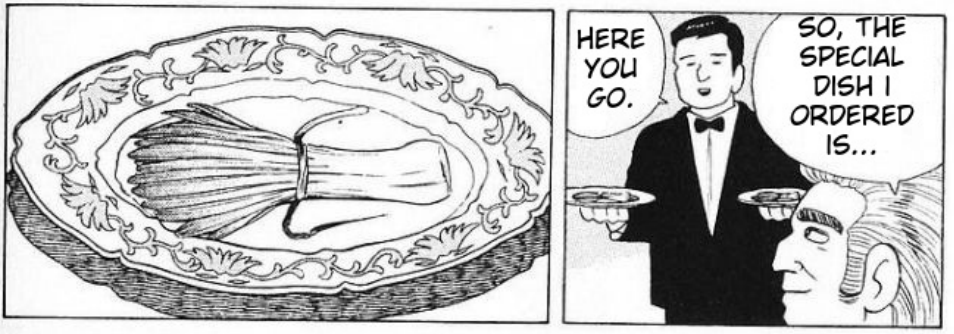
IT'S VEGETABLES, MY FRIEND, VEGETABLES.

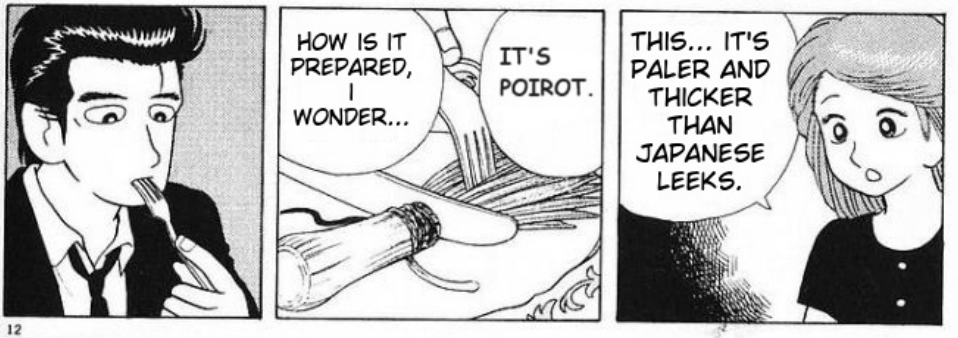
WHY IS THAT, CHIEF?
STILL, I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL A BIT DISSATISFIED WITH FRENCH CUISINE COMPARED TO CHINESE OR JAPANESE CUISINE.

11


IN JAPANESE OR CHINESE CUISINE, VEGETABLES PLAY AN EQUAL ROLE TO MEAT OR FISH, BUT IN FRENCH CUISINE, THEY'RE OFTEN JUST USED AS A MERE GARNISH.
FRENCH PEOPLE AT HOME EAT PLENTY OF VEGETABLES, BUT IT'S SURPRISING HOW FEW VEGETABLE DISHES YOU FIND ON RESTAURANT MENUS.

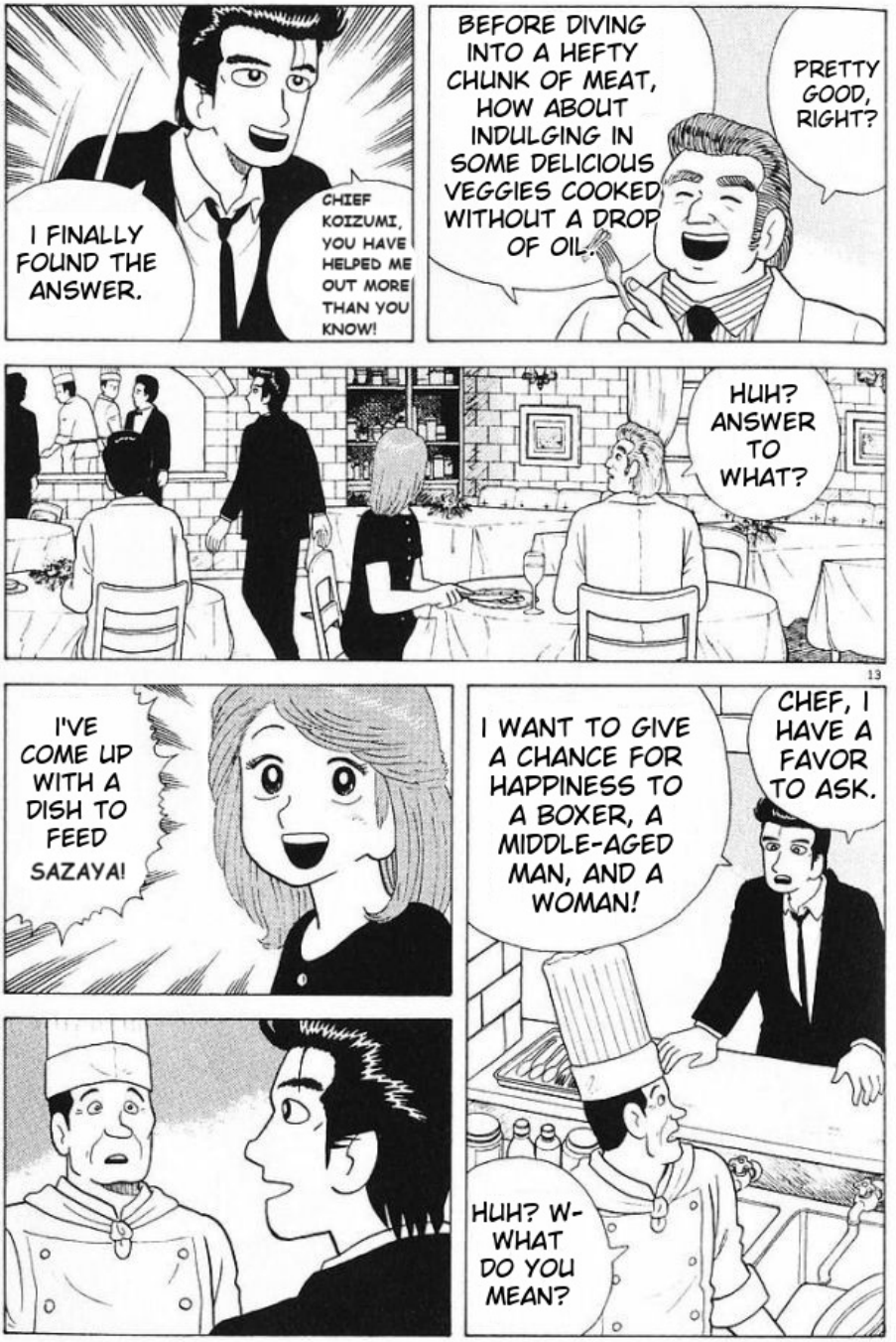
EVERY MEAL MUST HAVE A PERFECT BALANCE OF MEAT AND VEGETABLES. FROM THAT PERSPECTIVE, FRENCH CUISINE IS ABSOLUTELY LACKING IN VEGGIES AND NOT AT ALL HEALTHY.
ACCORDING TO RECENT NUTRITIONAL STUDIES, THE IDEA OF SKIPPING VEGGIES AT DINNER JUST BECAUSE YOU HAD THEM FOR LUNCH IS ALL WRONG.

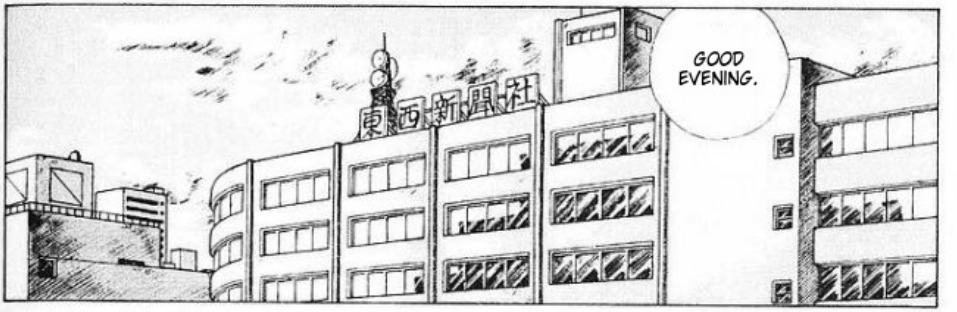

HERE YOU GO.
SO, THE SPECIAL DISH I ORDERED IS...


HOW IS IT PREPARED, I WONDER...
IT'S POIROT.
THIS... IT'S PALER AND THICKER THAN JAPANESE LEEKS.

12

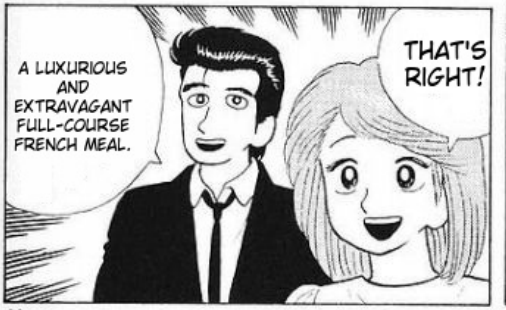
ZERO FAT.
AND IT DOESN'T USE ANY BUTTER OR CREAM AT ALL.
HMM... TRULY RICH IN FLAVOR. IT'S ELEGANT YET HASN'T LOST THE ROBUSTNESS OF LEEKS.
SO TENDER, SWEET, AND FRAGRANT!


I FINALLY FOUND THE ANSWER.
CHIEF KOIZUMI, YOU HAVE HELPED ME OUT MORE THAN YOU KNOW!
BEFORE DIVING INTO A HEFTY CHUNK OF MEAT, HOW ABOUT INDULGING IN SOME DELICIOUS VEGGIES COOKED WITHOUT A DROP OF OIL.
PRETTY GOOD, RIGHT?
HUH? ANSWER TO WHAT?
13
I'VE COME UP WITH A DISH TO FEED SAZAYA!
I WANT TO GIVE A CHANCE FOR HAPPINESS TO A BOXER, A MIDDLE-AGED MAN, AND A WOMAN!
CHEF, I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK.
HUH? W-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


東西新聞社
GOOD EVENING.

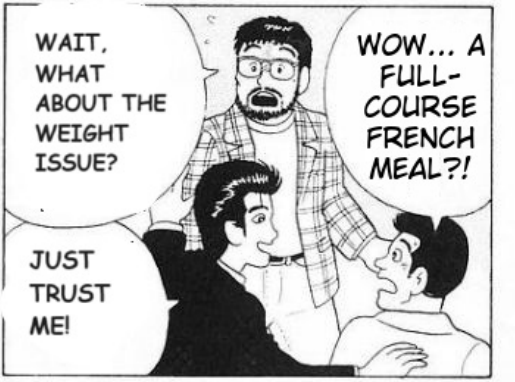
I BROUGHT HIM HERE BECAUSE YOU SAID YOU WANTED TO TREAT SAZAYA.

T-THANK YOU...
OH MY...
WELCOME.

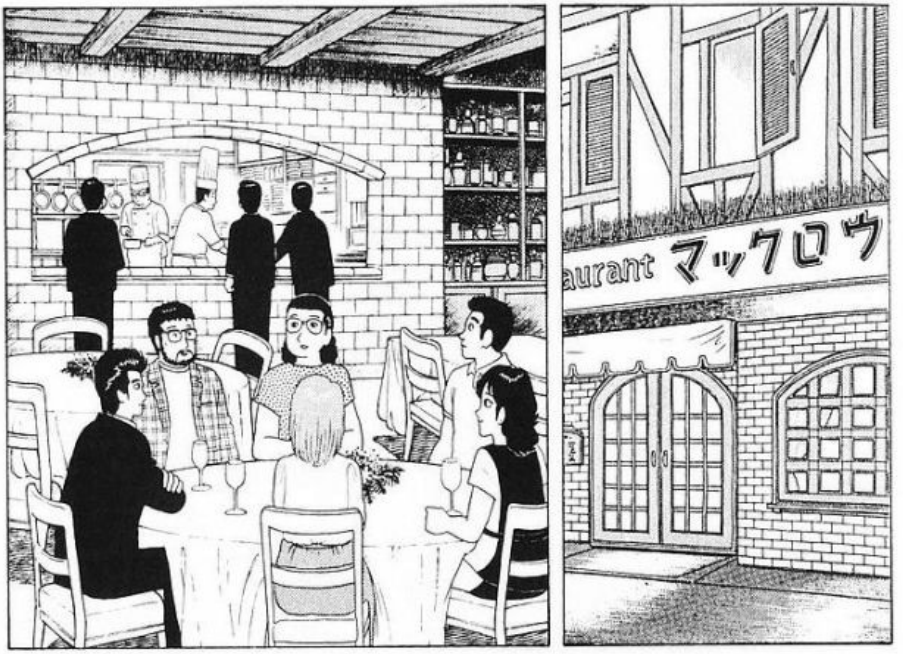

A LUXURIOUS AND EXTRAVAGANT FULL-COURSE FRENCH MEAL.
THAT'S RIGHT!

14

OH MY, I...
WELL, SHALL WE GO TOO?
WHY NOT? LET'S GO!


WAIT, WHAT ABOUT THE WEIGHT ISSUE?
WOW... A FULL-COURSE FRENCH MEAL?!
JUST TRUST ME!

FOODIE.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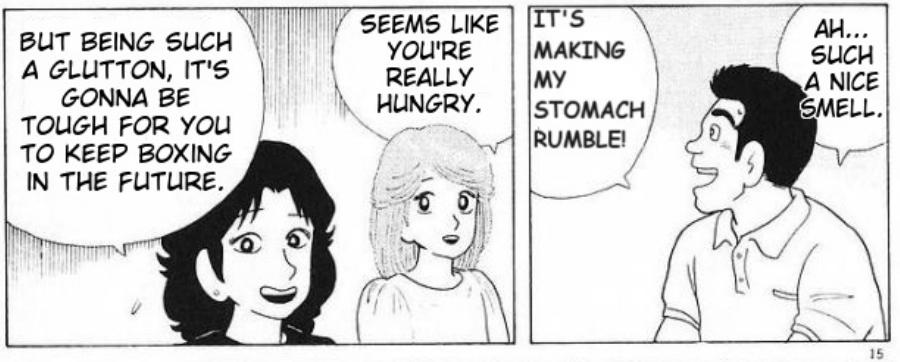
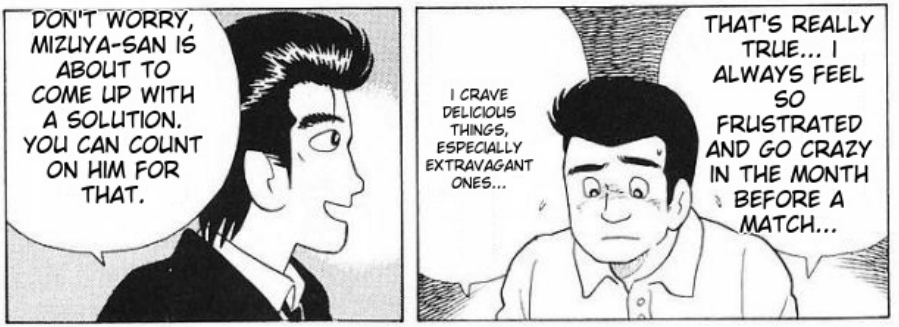

BUT BEING SUCH A GLUTTON, IT'S GONNA BE TOUGH FOR YOU TO KEEP BOXING IN THE FUTURE.
SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE REALLY HUNGRY.
IT'S MAKING MY STOMACH RUMBLE!
AH... SUCH A NICE SMELL.

15


DON'T WORRY, MIZUYA-SAN IS ABOUT TO COME UP WITH A SOLUTION. YOU CAN COUNT ON HIM FOR THAT.
I CRAVE DELICIOUS THINGS, ESPECIALLY EXTRAVAGANT ONES...
THAT'S REALLY TRUE... I ALWAYS FEEL SO FRUSTRATED AND GO CRAZY IN THE MONTH BEFORE A MATCH...

WELL, WELL!
I REALLY PUT MY HEART INTO THINKING ABOUT IT FOR MR. ARAKAWA AND MS. TABATA, YOU KNOW.
YOU SEEM QUITE CONFIDENT, HUH?
THIS IS THE HERB SAUCE FOR THE ENDIVE.
HERE YOU GO.
ALRIGHT, LET THE FULL-COURSE MEAL BEGIN!
OH... WESTERN VEGETABLES, WHAT A PLEASANT AROMA!
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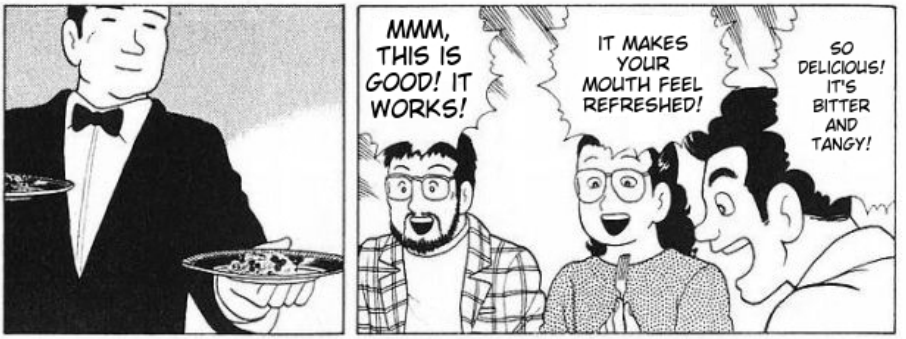
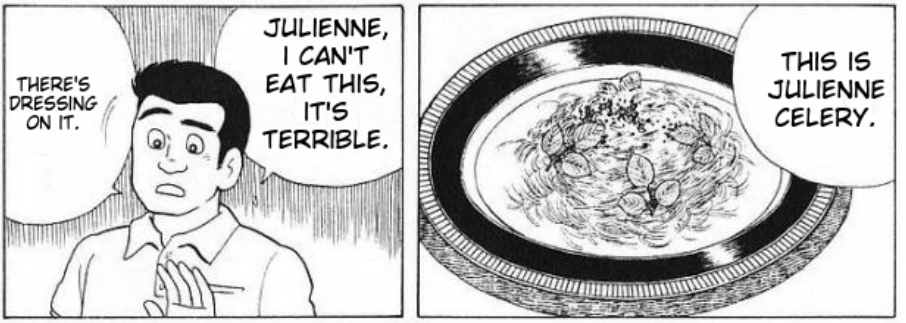
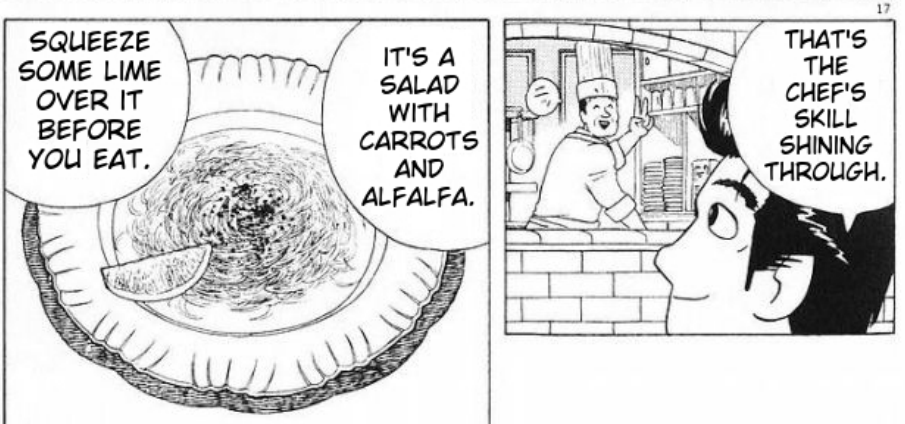
FOODIE.


MMM, THIS IS GOOD! IT WORKS!
IT MAKES YOUR MOUTH FEEL REFRESHED!
SO DELICIOUS! IT'S BITTER AND TANGY!

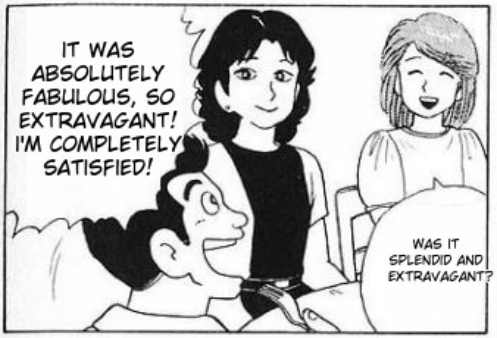

JULIENNE, I CAN'T EAT THIS, IT'S TERRIBLE.
THERE'S DRESSING ON IT.
THIS IS JULIENNE CELERY.

REALLY, NO SALAD OIL AT ALL IN THIS!!
AND YET, IT TASTES AMAZING!!
OH, I SEE.
DON'T WORRY, I DIDN'T USE ANY OIL, JUST VINEGAR.


SQUEEZE SOME LIME OVER IT BEFORE YOU EAT.
IT'S A SALAD WITH CARROTS AND ALFALFA.
THAT'S THE CHEF'S SKILL SHINING THROUGH.

THIS TASTES SO GOOD!!
PROVENCAL-STYLE CHERRY TOMATOES.
...THEY KEEP BRINGING OUT ALL THESE VEGETABLE APPETIZERS...
GRILLED ZUCCHINI WITH A HINT OF TARRAGON.
18
WAIT, HOLD ON, A FULL COURSE WITH JUST VEGETABLES?!
WOW!!
IF IT'S LOW-CALORIE, THEN IT'S GOTTA BE A VEGETABLE FULL COURSE.
AS LONG AS IT'S DELICIOUS AND EXTRAVAGANTLY FANCY,
A VEGETABLE FULL COURSE, I TELL YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? TODAY IT'S ALL ABOUT THE VEGGIES.
A VEGETABLE FULL COURSE!!

ALRIGHT, BRING IT ON, KEEP 'EM COMING!
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF A VEGETABLE FULL-COURSE MEAL, BUT IT'S DELICIOUS!
I SEE WHAT YOU DID THERE.
THESE LEMONS ARE DOMESTICALLY GROWN, SO THEY'RE SAFE AND SOUND.
GREEN ASPARAGUS WITH A HINT OF LEMON.
LIMA BEANS AND SILK-PODDED PEAS IN A RED BEAN SAUCE.
AND FINALLY, WE HAVE THE PEARL ONIONS STEWED IN VIENNESE STYLE.
HELP YOURSELF TO THE DAIKON RADISH SIMMERED IN CONSOMME.
19
FRESH TOMATO SAUCE WITH DAIKON RADISH...


IT WAS ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS, SO EXTRAVAGANT! I'M COMPLETELY SATISFIED!
WAS IT SPLENDID AND EXTRAVAGANT?

THE DISHES ARE AMAZING, JUST LAVISH AND LUXURIOUS!
I NEVER KNEW VEGETABLES COULD BE THIS DELICIOUS!
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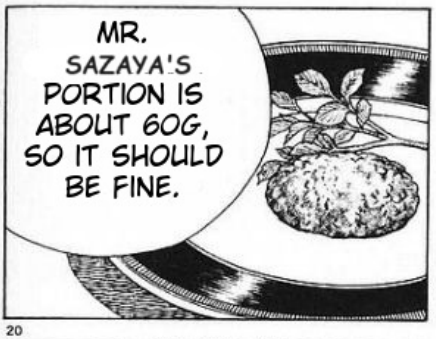
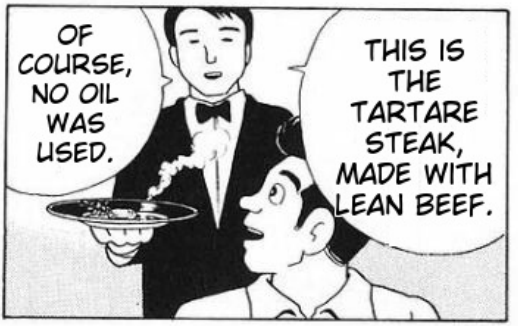
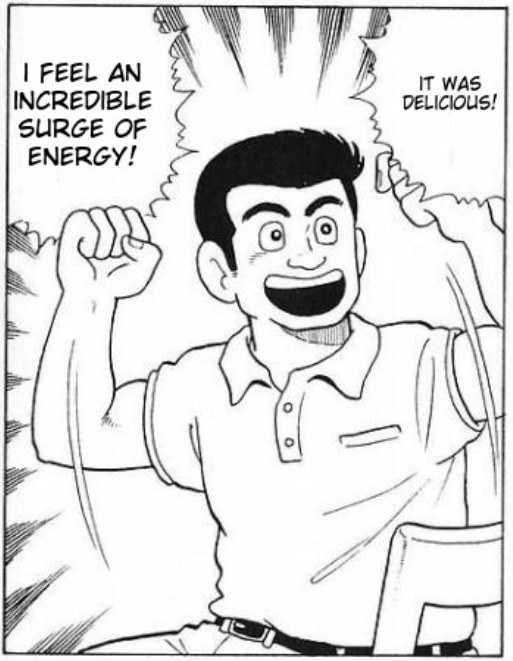
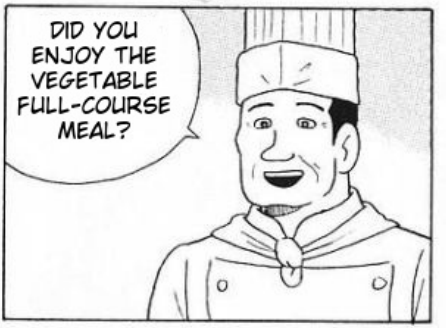

MR. SAZAYA'S PORTION IS ABOUT 60G, SO IT SHOULD BE FINE.


OF COURSE, NO OIL WAS USED.
THIS IS THE TARTARE STEAK, MADE WITH LEAN BEEF.

20


I FEEL AN INCREDIBLE SURGE OF ENERGY!
IT WAS DELICIOUS!

OF COURSE, IT'S ALL IN THE SAFE ZONE.


DID YOU ENJOY THE VEGETABLE FULL-COURSE MEAL?

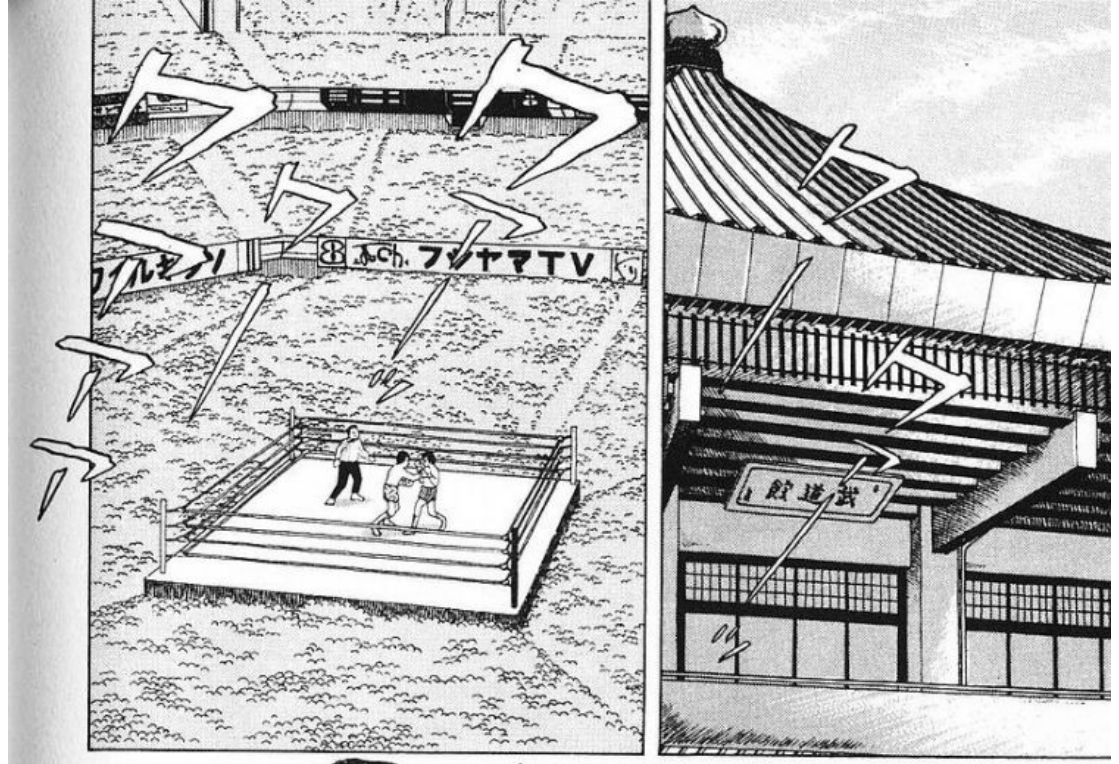
WELL, AT LEAST THAT'S GOOD NEWS. WIN FOR THE SAKE OF THOSE TWO OVER THERE!
HUH?

CHEF, THIS WON'T DO.

EMBARRASSING, ISN'T IT?
WELL, LOOKS LIKE THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT US!

WE WERE SUPPOSED TO USE NO OIL IN TODAY'S DISH.
SLIPPING UP WITH YOUR TONGUE IS SO ODD.

OH NO... I SLIPPED UP!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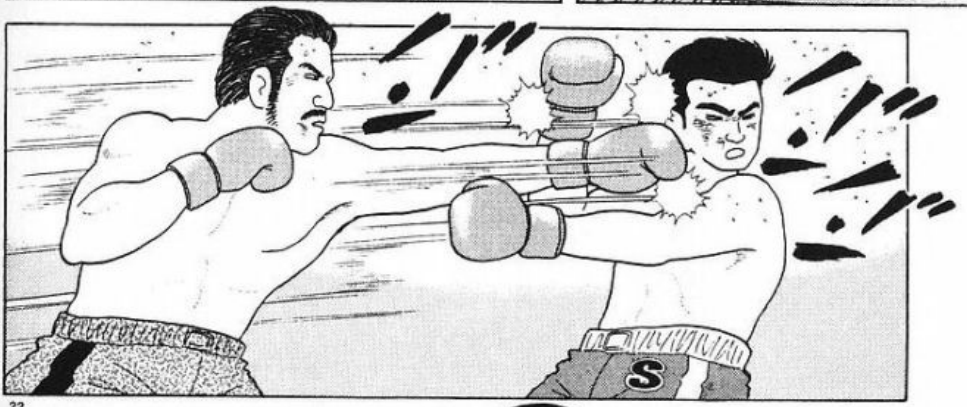
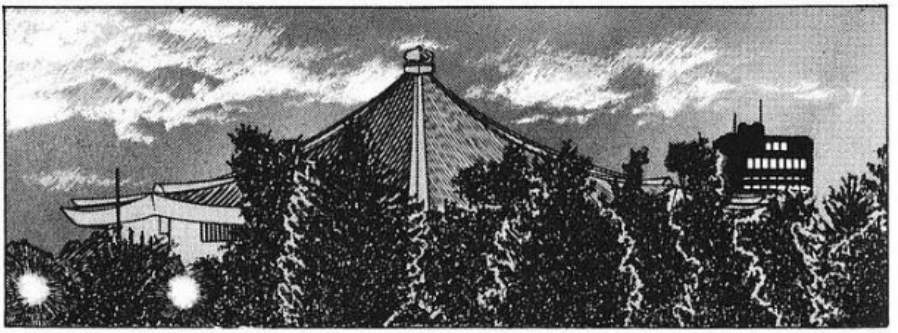


IT'S AN INTENSE EXCHANGE OF BLOWS!
SAZAYA!!! SHOW SOME GUTS! WHAT WAS THE POINT OF EATING THAT FULL-COURSE VEGETABLE MEAL?
IF SAZAYA LOSES AFTER ALL THIS...

UGH, COME ON, SAZAYA!!! GO ALL OUT, DON'T HOLD BACK!
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE, DON'T LET IT SLIP AWAY! GO FOR IT!
COME ON, RIGHT THERE! GIVE IT YOUR ALL! ONE MORE TIME!

WOO-HOO!! HE DID IT—!!
WHAT A WIN!!!!

お FOODIE.



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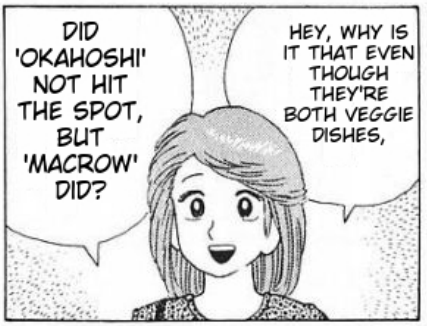
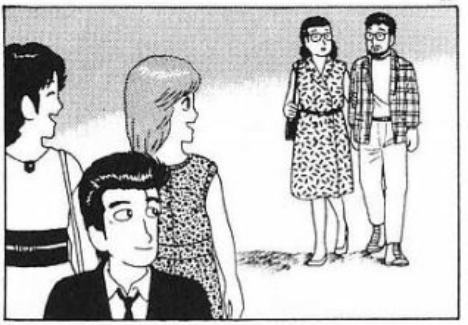
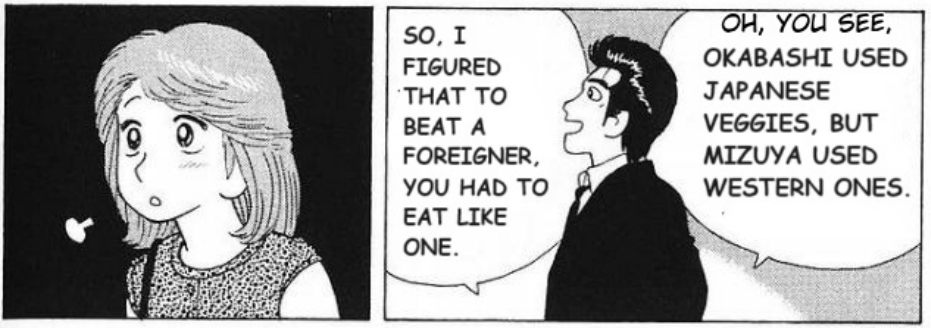
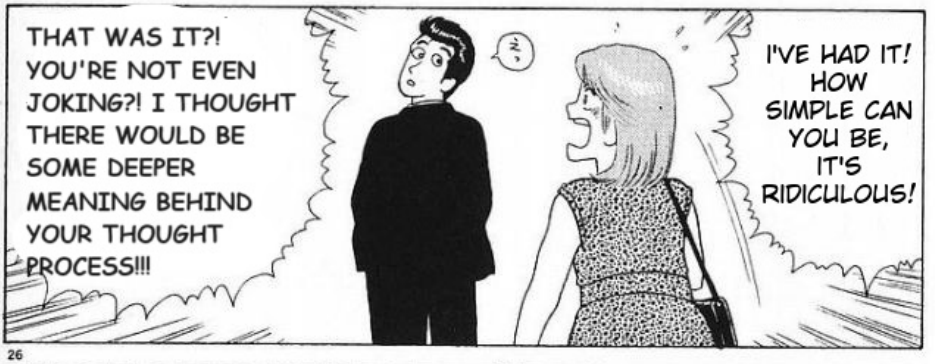

DID 'OKAHOSHI' NOT HIT THE SPOT, BUT 'MACROW' DID?
HEY, WHY IS IT THAT EVEN THOUGH THEY'RE BOTH VEGGIE DISHES,







OISHINBO VOLUME 7 - THE END